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MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE AND RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

OF

WILLIAM LEWIS,

LATE OF BRISTOL.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS,

Addressed by Him to Individuals, on different Occasions.

PHILADELPHIA:
PUBLISHED BY B. & T. KITE,
No. 20, North Third Street.
1821.

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PREFACE.

THE following Narrative of the Life and religious Experience of the subject of these Memoirs, up to the time of his joining the Society of Friends, was written by himself, and addressed to a very particular acquaintance, in compliance with an earnest solicitation for it; but not without considerable hesitation on his part, consistently with the views he expresses therein, of the *caution* necessary in communicating to others, any thing relative to our own spiritual concerns; in unison also with these sentiments, he did not (at last) give it, without an injunction, that no copy should be taken, even for private use, during his life, but as no positive engagement was made, to keep it thus dormant after his decease, the individual to whom it was addressed, has yielded to the wish of many of his friends, and permitted the publication of such parts as appeared calculated to convey information at once interesting and instructive to survivors.

The first part of this publication, contains the account given, as above mentioned, by himself; but as it ends about nineteen years before his decease, and at an important period (just as he had become a member of the Society of Friends) a desire will naturally attend the minds of many

readers, to know *how* he continued his course, and what was the end of his race. For supplying this information, a brief account is given by those who knew him well, and had constant opportunity of marking, both his public and private walk—and here it may be right to observe, that in pourtraying some parts of his character which shed a degree of lustre upon it, it is very far from the wish or design of the Publishers to extol the creature: their object is, to exemplify, for the encouragement and instruction of others, the excellency and efficacy of that heavenly principle of Light and Life, in which he most surely believed, and to which he bore ample testimony; by submission to the quickening renovating power whereof, he was brought up out of the horrible pit, and out of the miry clay: his feet were set upon a rock: his goings established, and a new song was put into his mouth.

That a serious and attentive perusal of these Memoirs may prove extensively beneficial, is the sincere desire of THE EDITORS.

Bristol, 3d Mo. 1st, 1819.

MEMOIRS,

&c.

To *******

My dear Friend,

WHEN I consider, and considering *feel*, the depth and strength of self-love in the fallen soul of man, broken off from union with the perfect will of its glorious Creator; and the almost perpetual springing forth of vain glorious desire, branching and spreading in some direction or other, from this bitter root; writing or even speaking of ourselves, appears to my view, an engagement requiring watchfulness and self-abasement: under this persuasion I have cautiously avoided epistolary correspondence on my own spiritual concerns, and have long believed it would be better for all religiously exercised persons (particularly those who are young) to be less employed in this way, than is commonly the case; apprehending they are not sufficiently aware of the subtle *workings* of him, who, in a transformed

appearance, can secretly awaken desires after significance and strong interest for us, in the minds of our friends, as religious proficients, under a profession of feeling such weakness, as makes questionable to us our classing with even the lowest rank in the school of Christ.

That the operation of the "Light of Life," come by our holy Lord Jesus, the one blessed quickening Spirit, doth *early* contrite, abase, and humble, every heart that fully opens for its entrance, and adheres to its manifestations. all, who have witnessed its convicting nature and power, will readily admit; and consequently, that humble, penitential acknowledgments accord with the real state and feelings, of even "Babes in Christ;" but knowing in some measure, that the inward thought of the heart is deep; that deceitfulness lodges therein; can work itself into, and taint our best words and works, I remain fixed in the judgment, that (unless peculiar circumstances attach) *self* should not be our subject, when we write on spiritual matters; that the marvellous work of a gracious God in the deep of our hearts, should be gratefully acknowledged to *him* in secret; our inward sorrows poured out *before him;* that under the painful sense of our defilement, we should simply seek to that fountain which he hath provided, and which he alone opens, for the washing it away;

and thus go with the confession of our sins, to him who is faithful and just to forgive them; and who (if we are "workers together with him") will assuredly "cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Such being my sentiments, it will not appear strange, that I have been slow in complying with thy request to have some account of my spiritual concerns and movements: at length, however, I take up my pen for that purpose, and as the engagement will necessarily involve recollections of a very humiliating cast, I hope for some defence in such retrospect from the dangers alluded to, as too oft attendant on similar employment.

I was born the 17th of the 9th Month, 1753. Nothing *very remarkable* attached to my early days, that I can now recollect: I say, *nothing very remarkable*, because, unhappily, an early desire of, and pursuit after all that is in the world, is (in a greater or lesser degree) the course of every natural man's heart, according to the complexional bias: my own, I remember, was strongly drawn after lying vanities, the participation of which, was limited only by slender means and parental authority, that imposed close confinement to business; into which I was introduced in my fourteenth year, possessing little from my previous education but *writing* and arithmetic, all that my

father judged necessary for a plain mec[illegible] a[illegible] his designation respecting me. Previ[illegible]ou[illegible] this period, the only effect of the inshin[illegible]ing divine Light in my dark heart, now re[illegible]me bered, was the solemn impressive author[illegible] of the Holy Scriptures, and the beauty th[illegible]at appeared to my view in true holiness of li[illegible], and entire dedication of heart unto Almighty God; leading me greatly to admire, and even to take comfort concerning his ancient servants, whose lives were fully devoted to him; and to regret the falling short of some others who appeared to have a degree of zeal for his glory; but at the age of fourteen, the *convicting* power of the precious light was sensibly felt, and condemnation awfully witnessed, in the pursuit of sinful pleasures; none of which were ever indulged in, without a dread of that eye, from which I both knew and *felt*, nothing could be hid; to lessen this terror, faint resolutions were formed, to resist when next tempted, but these being chiefly the effect of fear, and resorted to, as the dip of a finger in water, to cool the fiery indignation I felt burning in my conscience, were generally broken in the hour of trial; *some* feeling, notwithstanding, continued for a considerable time, and a faint hope was cherished of emerging from the miry clay, into which I had plunged my poor soul; but no *effort* was made to break off from my

evil ways, and the time I could command, was mostly spent in reading plays and novels; hereby an indolent effeminate turn of mind was excited and nourished; extreme fondness of dress, and every thing gratifying to such a cast of spirit, was more and more indulged in; useful and instructive literary productions were dry and tasteless; business, and, in a word, every thing that required mental energy and uniform attention, became heavy and irksome: thus, even the *desire* to struggle for deliverance, seemed in great measure extinct; and though dread of the consequences of a continuance in such a course, would at times awaken, yet I thought it next to an impossibility for any thing to loosen my affections, short of the immediate prospect of a removal out of the world; for so tenacious was my poor mind of *present* enjoyment, and so fearful of any interruption thereof, that I well remember the alarm I felt, lest the *doctrine* inculcated by the clergyman of the parish in which I resided, at the time called Christmas, should be at all impressive or convicting; namely, that it was set apart by the Church for the purpose of *piously* commemorating the mercy and love of our heavenly Father, in sending his dear Son into the world, in order, that by delivering us from its corruptions, our spirits might be fitted and prepared for an abode with him in the

realms of light and purity: I knew, that if this doctrine were *acted upon* by the elderly part of his auditors, our merry meetings, my chief joy, hitherto peculiarly marked with indulgence at this much longed-for season, would necessarily be discontinued; having, even in this dark state, (without recurring to doctrine or precept) an inward conviction of the incompatibility of a disposition to worldly delights, with true spiritual relish; and indeed the supposing both can subsist together, involves an incongruity of the greatest magnitude. A refuge, however, from those fears, was near at hand; I recollected that heretofore the same doctrine had been *preached*, *heard*, and (if accompanied with rhetorical embellishment) *admired*; but this all ended, both preacher and hearers, each according to their ability, went away, to throw in their *mite*, at *least*, for the promotion of feasting, dancing, singing, &c. *thus* my *alarm* was quieted, in the hope that things would go on in their usual course, and that we should continue to "chaunt to the sound of the viol, drink wine out of bowls, and anoint with the chief ointments," undisturbed by apprehensions of future woe for present ease; or at *least* enabled, by the aid derived from hand joining to hand, in a tolerable degree to silence them. Such was my condition at this early period; it continued, without any material al-

teration until the year 1775, (the 22d of my life) when I was powerfully wrought upon, and *suddenly* formed an earnest purpose of heart to break off from my sins; and to seek peace with my God, in a truly religious course. Immediately upon taking this resolution, I acted upon it; threw off my gay apparel; restricted myself to uniform moderation in satisfying *even the real wants* of nature; cutting off every thing like *indulgence* in eating, drinking, sleeping, &c. in a word, all of a recreative cast; and strictly endeavoured to redeem the precious time I could command, by retiring to my bed-room, or attending some public place of worship, immediately on my release from outward business: in private, I prayed frequently, earnestly, and at as much length as I could, knowing, at this time, little more of christian practice, than what was comprised in such engagements and exercises; quite uninformed respecting *doctrines*, I had no predilection towards any particular sect on account of their distinguishing tenets, or forms of public worship; but having long entertained a high opinion of the Wesleyan Methodists, from their *daily* meeting together, I frequented their assemblies for a time; after which, at the persuasion of a friend professing among the other sect, (the followers of George Whitfield) I became a hearer at the Tabernacle, and hastily

joined in membership there; I call it *hastily*, because there was no previous deep examination of their opinions, nor earnest application to the fountain of wisdom, for direction; both of which, such an important movement called for; but as much as I remember of my feelings at that time, they were so strongly excited by the *main object* of my new course, viz Peace with God, and a well grounded hope of being admitted to his heavenly kingdom at last, that very little room was left in my mind to be occupied on points of doctrine; such sweetness, for a time, accompanied my religious exercises, that it seemed enough for me to *hear* of God's mercy in Christ Jesus, and that an *experimental participation* thereof was *attainable* in this present world; and these things being set forth in a lively manner by their preachers, were so like marrow and fatness to my soul, that (satisfied therewith) other points, occasionally introduced, made but little impression, and consequently obtained very slight consideration. But this state of mind was, little by little, disturbed; on being questioned, as to the ground of my selecting this body of professors from among the rest, and on what foundation I built my religious *doctrinal* opinions (naturally supposed to coincide with those of my brethren) I became tenacious in these respects—a *sectarian* spirit found an entrance, and under

its influence I began to search the Scriptures, with a view to collect all they contained that would bear a construction favourable to the Calvinistic system; *labouring hard* against the force of passages with which I found it impossible to reconcile that system, and struggling with an *inward conviction*, which (do what I could) opposed the belief of partiality in God, and of a covenant of grace and mercy in Christ Jesus, which extended to a *few only*, of his fallen creatures, leaving the rest to perish eternally. Thus exercised, the good providence of my heavenly Father, directed the attention of a piously disposed neighbour, to my state; who (much concerned at the danger I appeared to be in, of imbibing the doctrines alluded to) put into my hand some deeply spiritual writings, clearly and fully convincing to my mind; so that I soon desisted from an engagement which nothing but sectarian tenacity introduced me into; an engagement, in which *conviction* was *risisted*, the plain doctrines and declarations of Prophets, Apostles, and Christ Jesus himself, were rejected, and, in fine, every thought of Almighty God, reconcileable with the belief of his *goodness* and *justice*, was almost totally abandoned. Oh! what a shocking idea to cherish! that a *good* and *gracious* God, should permit *myriads* of myriads of intelligent spirits, to come into existence, with

nothing before them but a wearisome p
passage through a vale of tears, ab ou
with trouble and sorrow, and to termina
by their entrance into a state still more re
with suffering! where, woe irremediable;
ror and anguish at present inconceivable,
be their portion to all eternity! How
strous! to believe that ANY of God's creature
should have (*by his irrevocable appointment*
such a destination! How *unworthy* a though
of him, to suppose, that, with this secret pur-
pose, he could commission Prophets and Apos-
tles to call *such* to a participation of his glori-
ous nature, and to seek an inheritance in his
blessed kingdom; and at length send even his
dear Son among them, more strongly still to in-
vite to this unspeakable joy; awfully to warn
of the miserable consequences of the too com-
mon neglect thereof, and in the plainest terms
to declare the incapacity for reception to con-
sist in a wilful indisposition of heart; "Ye
will not come unto me, that ye might have
life." The meek servant of God likewise, in
executing his commission to the Egyptian Mo-
narch, rebuked him for *exalting himself*, and
refusing humble submission to the command
of the Most High, by retaining his people;
but according to the foregoing doctrine, he was
as fully under the influence of omnipotence, in
thus preparing himself to be "a vessel of

wrath," as Moses could possibly have been, when miraculously displaying its dread power, awfully and peculiarly felt by this unhappy king; and if the highly endowed messenger of heaven, had succeeded in his endeavours to keep back this rebellious man from his purpose, had been the means of softening, instead of more hardening his heart; *so far* as he was instrumental in effecting this, in an equal degree, would he, *on this principle*, have led the king into a line of conduct opposed to the purpose for which he was raised up to the dignity of supreme rule? Our Holy Redeemer also, though declaring "I and my Father are one;" "I do always those things that please him;" "The Father sheweth the Son *all things* that himself doeth:" even *this* blessed possessor of divine knowledge, without mixture or measure, when weeping over Jerusalem, and intimating his oft-manifested desire to gather its inhabitants, must likewise have been under the influence of a spirit, not in unison with his Father's secret counsel and purposes, and must have cherished a creaturely desire for the extension of the covenant of grace, beyond the limits set by infinite Wisdom, Power and Love! To conclude these remarks and digression from the main subject of this Letter; if to see aright the *wisdom* and goodness of our God, *his wonderful* works to the children

of men, we must view the vast machine of intelligent motion and action, as contrived and organized by his unerring wisdom, and in its present jarring workings, impelled by the secret spring of *omnipotent determinate purpose*; if (howsoever the heart may devise a way) the Lord *in this manner* directeth the steps, what then is there to *deplore* in the sinner's course, *but the primary efficient designation?* or what to *admire* in the saint's marks of an interior image, changing "from glory to glory," but the stamp of the eternal seal, leaving an indelible character on every subject of its pressure, under the guidance of an omnipotent hand, which, either writes "in the Book of Life," or leaves for the "lower parts of the earth," *according to an absolute irresistible purpose!* The creatures of God thus fitting and preparing themselves, *according to their maker's will and working*, actions have a new aspect, and lose their seeming difference *equally sanctioned*, if not sanctified. The Traitor's kiss! the leaning of the beloved Disciple on his Master's breast!

To return to my particular state. Releas from these shackles, my mind found sweet berty in admitting the belief in the univer love of God in Christ, to his creature m fully received the apostolic testimony of *being* "*no* respecter of persons;" and re

ed, every opinion and doctrine that was not built on this foundation: the Holy Scriptures were now perused with *openness of heart*, and laying aside all preconceived opinions, I was soon convinced of these Truths, viz.

I. That the work of Religion is wholly inward, and wrought by the operation of God's Holy Spirit.

II. That true Worship is also inward; consisting *principally* in humble prostration of Spirit before the omnipresent "God of the Spirits of all Flesh;" "a God near at hand, and not afar off," "in whom we live, and move, and have our being."

III. That Almighty God in the riches of his mercy, hath implanted in the heart of every man, a seed of the living word; a real principle of a heavenly divine nature.

IV. That the renovated state, or the arising of this "incorruptible seed" into a predominating power of life, being as essential to the true perception of spiritual things, as a participation of the human nature, to the knowledge of "the things of a man;" the quickening operation of the Holy Spirit, in and upon this unspeakable gift, giving renewed sensibility of God's holy presence to the soul, is *essential* to *acts* of true worship, and should be reverently waited for; thus seeking, "if haply we *may feel* after and find him."

V. That consequently, the faith to which all things are possible, is something of a deeper nature, than the *assent* of the judgment to the truth of doctrines; or a *concurrence* with what is called by many, the "Gospel Plan of Salvation," or even with what is contained in the whole credenda of systematical divinity.

The spiritual writings before alluded to, were undoubtedly, clearly convincing to my mind and prior to these *new* convictions; but the seal that fully stamped them was the Apostle's testimony at Athens, setting forth the creature's true relation to its glorious Creator; the high origin and destination of man; his consequent proper exercise and glorious privilege; "to *seek*, if haply he might *feel after* and *find him*;" not ignorantly worshipping without knowing what, but adoring in spirit a manifested God. Oh, that expression, "*Feel after him!*" how forcibly does it strike with a sense of the necessity of *deep introversion* of spirit, in seeking access to the fountain of purity and love.

With this view of things, and under these impressions, the *manner of worship*, as well as the *communications*, at the Tabernacle, soon became unsatisfactory; the meetings of the Society of Friends were thought of, and resorted to, chiefly on the ground of their being conducted *exteriorly* in a way more congenial *to my convictions*, than those of any other,

that I had knowledge of: but not without expectations from the ministry among them; believing that those who were really called to this work would receive *immediately*, what was suitable to the states of those to whom they ministered: the vocal communications I heard among them were mostly close and convincing: clear also upon points I had been exercised about; at times deeply spiritual, and enforced with energy, accompanied with something which evinced to my feelings, they were the result of living experience. This movement tended to *deepen* my late impressions, and I began to act in correspondence with them; instead of singing; uttering a long string of petitions, and much reading in my hours of retirement, I waited in silence, with earnest desire and labour of mind after inward solemnity and prostration of spirit before the Holy One; longing after that quickening power, which, contriting, prepares the heart to receive divine communications, and, receiving them, to return of *his own*, to the great Giver of every perfect gift.

Ceasing, in this manner, from creaturely activity, and my attention confined to what passed *within*, a painful conviction ensued of my being in *reality* (as to spirituals) "poor and miserable, blind and naked." That precious *light* which had previously visited wi

sweet drawings, and now allured me into the wilderness, shewed me "my desert land;" and the dark workings of unbelief and impatience suggested that it had left me there: my little experience prior to this, was called in question, and at length considered as mostly the effect of a heated imagination: *perturbation* and even *anguish* of soul ensued; I wrote bitter things against myself almost continually, and refusing every hope of comfort, a door was opened for despondency; it entered my very reins, and I let go all my confidence; the bitter cup of *despair* was tasted; and considering myself forsaken of my God, I cried and sobbed aloud from disquietude of soul. In such a condition as this, thou wilt conclude, I could not continue long; *relief* would naturally be sought *some way:* the cruel subtle one was near, and thoughts like these presented, "I have deceived my soul in imagining myself a subject of divine grace, and attributing my first feelings and hopes to its operation; my heart and affections are still earthly and sensual, though the imagination for a time fondly pictured a heavenly interior: I have (though undesignedly) deceived my brethren and the world, in making religious profession: I am as other men, to whom I have *virtually said,* 'Stand by thyself;' and now seeing myself *in the* true light, I must appear hence-

forth as I really am, and no longer continue as a wolf in sheep's clothing."

This bait of the enemy, to a mind weary and comfortless, in which the seed of life was not so rooted as patiently to endure tribulation, was unhappily swallowed; and after some months deep wading, or rather *plunging*, in dark waters, in an evil hour I yielded to the suggestion that "Rest was good," *however obtained*, from such painful and fruitless labour; that the land I had viewed as a howling wilderness and vale of tears, was (compared with my dreary spot) *pleasant;* and thus I again "bowed my shoulders to bear and became a servant to tribute." *Religious restraint* was in great measure thrown aside, although I kept for a time within the bounds of morality, and to such order as was common in my father's house; going with the family on the first day of the week to their place of worship, called the Church, and hearing some of them read the Scriptures; but alas! these bounds soon became painfully narrow to my will and the workings of my natural propensities; the *one effectual restraining power* being departed from, they awoke with force in my enslaved heart, and gradually took the reins, so that I was indeed led captive at the will of the cruel tempter of mankind; no desire to resist temptation *remained*, but every new path that

opened any thing pleasant to my view, was eagerly pursued; taverns were resorted to, and gaming (the chief pleasure there) becoming peculiarly attractive, whole nights were devoted to this destructive vice: in short, sad as it is to relate, I became a mere libertine, and my last state was now worse than my first.

Before I proceed further, in reciting the *consequences* of my vile apostacy, it may be best, in order to give a clear view of the leading and concurrent circumstances, to go back a little to the *gloomy state and exercises* which preceded—As I have already said, my first purpose of devoting myself to Almighty God was sincere—I really intended, from that day forth, to take a hope in him, for my portion; but the vow was made *hastily*, without counting or indeed knowing the cost; in considerable ignorance also of myself, particuliarly of my instability of spirit, and an effeminate mind, which shrunk from suffering, and was very tenacious of present enjoyment, whatever object was in view; humility, the main requisite for laying a sure foundation for stability and real advancement, was but little regarded; *great things* were desired and expected, and *fervidity* of mind, cherished as a mark of true zeal, and mistaken for a feature of the truly renewed *and pure* image. When, therefore, I was led *inwardly*, and became more intimately ac-

inted with myself, and to have some dis-
ıment of the difference between creaturely
t and divine light, and was made to feel
convicting power of the latter; and seeing
ein my condition to be so far below what I
thought it to be, there was (in addition to
distress I have mentioned as feeling on a
ious ground) a considerable portion from
creaturely source, which gradually gaining
ınd, gave the enemy an advantage, and at
th a *triumph*, over me. Self-love having
ing to feed upon, it soon became weary of
ation, and heavy under its humiliating fast.
irement for religious exercises, divested of
hat had at first given a relish thereto, be-
e irksome, and pretexts for the omission of
vere easily admitted, if not sought for:
I well remember, viz. *conversation on re-
us subjects* with a neighbour, at the times
ierly allotted to private devotion; but con-
on followed, of its being resorted to, as a
f from the weight of my own proper exer-
and burden; this brought condemnation
increased discouragement; my confidence
rally diminished—acts of rebellion against
iction in other things (comparatively lit-
followed, until, at length my hope was let
the heavens were as brass over my head,
having no expectation of any prayer of
passing through, it ultimately produced

the effects already recited: thus, thou seest, my friend, there was a "drawing back" in the hour of tribulation, instead of keeping the word of patience: divine love had allured me; brought me into the wilderness; into the valley of Achor, (i. e. trouble) in wisdom the allotted spot to dwell in; if I had continued there until all that hindered my progress towards victory over my soul's enemies, had died the appointed death; hoping and quietly waiting for the Lord's salvation; doubtless vineyards would in due time have been given me there, and I should have sung the Lord's song indeed, which he can give to his truly abased and "poor in spirit," even "in the night." But, sorrowful to relate! I now became a slave to my propensities; unable to bear reflection, company was eagerly and continually sought, and every means used to silence the voice of conscience, still awfully loud at times; for although I thus sought to flee from the presence of the Lord of heaven and earth, yet such was his pity and mercy to my poor soul, that he forsook me not utterly. In secret I was still pierced with the arrows of convicting light, and pressed sore with horrible dread of death and judgement to come; yet for the space of twelve years, relief was sought only by immersing deeper and deeper into libertine pursuits; so that vices to which I had no particu-

lar bias, were even courted; and (if there be such a thing) I tempted the tempter, and became indeed his "lawful captive." Oh! if there be on this side that state between which and the realms of light, the "great gulph is fixed," any anguish like that felt by the soul, which, after once receiving, thus rebels against the light! any condition more replete with internal horror and gloom, than that of *such* a backslider, it exceeds all I can picture to my imagination, or stretch my thoughts unto.

In the course of this long night of apostacy, some interesting events took place: I married, and had several children; formed a promising connection in trade, in which there was a fair prospect of providing for my family; but, not sufficiently alive to the weight of the solemn and interesting obligations I was now under, pleasure was followed with eagerness; particularly gaming; business and domestic duties becoming insipid, were greatly neglected. Thus I went on, *apparently* gay and happy, but in *reality* miserable; until the year 1789, when it pleased my long-suffering and merciful God to visit me with severe illness; wholly confined by this, I was now left to my own thoughts and reflections on my past course, and made *awfully to feel* the state it had brought me to; even to be "without hope and without God in the world." "Destruction

and misery (I knew) were in my path, the way of peace I was convinced I could otherwise know, than by turning with full pose of heart, unto him from whom I had deeply revolted: *partial* reformation I view as odious, in the sight of omniscience, particularly for such a one as myself; my former view of a truly religious state, and the deep inward work necessary to be passed through, in order to its attainment, all returned, and the cost of real discipleship with a crucified Master so counted, was terrific to my long corrupted and debased spirit; the "world's dread laugh" also, was no small thing to take into the account, for one, situated as I was; known to many of various classes in civil society, and (from marriage connections) in habits of intimacy with some who were in much grandeur in their manners and establishment in life; to all this were added, strong apprehensions that my natural instability would *ever* be prevalent and a faithful spirit too high for me to attain to. The struggle was deep and painful, but at length, strength was vouchsafed to renew my covenant with a good and gracious God who had long waited for my return, and now loudly called me so to exalt him as to become capable of a participation of his living mercies and tender forgiveness of my manifold sins. *Accordingly, on* the 26th day of the 9th month

1789, in the sight of a heart-searching God, I took up a purpose, from that time, earnestly to seek for peace with him; to break off from all my evil habits, and enter upon a truly religious course; earnestly praying for strength to perform my vows, and dreading nothing so much as unfaithfulness, or any abatement of the fervent desires which I felt, to be a true penitent, and (like the prodigal) a seeker to be received among such, in our heavenly Father's house. The Lord graciously regarded my petitions; delivered me from that *horror* at the thought of death, which had long been deeply felt in my soul; thus I gathered a *little* strength, and my head was lifted up, at times, *in hope;* and in the beginning of the year 1790, I was favoured with a return of bodily strength also, and matters both inward and outward, wore an aspect more cheering than for many years past. Oh! I little thought what a cloud was gathering, and about to overwhelm me in the deepest gloom!

[Our dear friend here enters into a detail of particulars, which cannot, with propriety, be thrown before the public. Suffice it to say, that the gathering cloud burst heavily upon him—his *domestic* comforts were broken up by several very afflictive circumstances—added to which, (by the sudden decease of his father

about the same time, and the very unexpected consequences ensuing) his concerns in trade were so seriously affected, that although he continued in business for several years after, he ultimately found it necessary to relinquish it entirely, with the loss of nearly the whole of his property, and to resort to the employment of an Accountant, for his subsistence: but those who knew him at this period, can bear testimony to his christian demeanour under these deeply trying events; and there is good ground to believe, that, by his patience and resignation under them, they became a blessing to him.]

In what thus outwardly befel me, I think was verified, that sooner or later, the backslider in heart is made to eat the fruit of his own ways, and that many stripes are prepared for those, who, *knowing* their Master's will, rebel against it. I now come to the relation of the exercises and convictions which led to my joining the people with whom I am in religious fellowship. My views of Religion and of the worship of Almighty God, continued the same as under my first profession; consequently, the principles and practices of every society of Christians, must be very distant from my sentiments, excepting those of *Friends*—yet looking upon the *division of the* church into sects, as the conse-

quence of a departure from the pure spirit of Christ, I strongly questioned for a time the propriety of my joining any one of them, exclusively; and determined upon seeking to God in secret, for his guidance in this matter; occasionally attending the different assemblies, but mostly those of the Friends and Methodists. A conduct so unusual, was likely to appear as the effect of an unsettled judgment, and I believe, did so, to many; but the case was not exactly so—I stood upon the ground mentioned page 17, still believing in the necessity of a holy quickening power from God, to revive in man the lost holy image in which he was first created, and that Jesus Christ was this power, inwardly revealed in every man; consequently, that looking to any thing short thereof for help, was at best, holding fast something founded on that dispensation which made nothing perfect, because it stood in exterior observations, which could do nothing effectual as pertaining to the conscience. The baptism, therefore, that now saveth, was (in my view) such an union with the world-renouncing spirit of Christ as gives the victory over things present; thus the Apostle, "As many as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ." "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts, &c. &c." *This* I took to be true spiritual bap-

tism. The supper of the Lord (so called) that which he himself enjoined, was certainly eating "his body" "and drinking his blood,"† [there is a spiritual body.] But here again, all exterior acts appear very insignificant, when he declared, that this participation of his flesh and blood was an union with him, of the same nature, as was his with his heavenly Father; (John v. 56, 57) this was the thing signified; can we then suppose he meant by any thing he said, at partaking of the Passover with his apostles, to enjoin the observance of some new outward and visible sign, instead thereof? Could he, as an High Priest made "after the power of an endless life," minister to his church in any thing like the priests under the law, whose gifts and sacrifices, we read, could not make him that did such service perfect, because it stood only in meats and drinks and divers washings, and carnal ordinances imposed on them *until the time of reformation?* His words indeed were (according to Luke) "This do, in remembrance of me;" but neither Matthew nor John, who were present, take any notice of the injunction—Could they possibly have omitted the mention of it, had they considered it a binding law, according to its literal import, in a new institution formed by the Lord himself, and by him commanded to be observed as solemnly as the Passover had

been? I cannot think this at all likely; but rather, that the injunction, as well as the declaration, "This is my body, &c." was intended to convey something more spiritual in its nature, than an outward act, which any unregenerate man might perform; even that which the apostle Paul alluded to, as the common privilege and calling of the quickened, in these remarkable words, "Even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, &c. &c." That the first converts held their *love feasts* in commemoration of our Lord's breaking outward bread, in which they had the sanction of the Apostles themselves, is undoubted; but may we not reasonably conclude, that in this, as well as in many other observances, they conceded to the weak state of their brethren and to their strong attachment to Mosaic rites? That they did so, *in some particulars*, is very evident. As to that of the apostle Paul to the Church at Corinth, concerning the abuses that had prevailed in the manner of keeping those feasts of charity, on which so much stress is laid, nothing in it seems applicable to an advanced state in the spiritual life—he could not, he says, speak unto them as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, "even as unto babes in Christ." Unless then it is concluded that the church of Christ must ever remain in an infant state,

such communications to these early converts cannot (I think) be considered as permanently binding on the church, nor can the food suited to its *infant*, and in some degree, *carnal* state be supposed proper nourishment for it, when further advanced towards maturity.

Other cardinal points in which the Society of Friends differs from most other bodies of christians, namely, those of war, oaths, and the ministry, I had early occasion of *publicly* evincing my unity with, a considerable time before I became a member of the society, or knew I ever should be; plainness and simplicity in apparel, manners, and speech also (to a certain extent) appeared to me from my early convictions to be quite accordant with the precepts and example of our Holy Redeemer; and well knowing that the vanity of my own heart, was that which induced conformity to the world in these respects, whilst in my state of bondage thereto, self denial in *practice* extended in some degree to them, in a gradual manner; and here it comes in my way to notice, that wide departure from the simplicity which is in Christ, and from the guidance of his meek, loving, holy spirit, at present so glaring in the outward and visible church; so that in the general, an almost total disregard both of the letter and spirit of the Gospel of Christ, is, with respect to these points, allow-

ed and even *defended*. Attention to *apparel*, as being any way connected with our demeanour before Almighty God, or with the walking before him in humility, righteousness, and holiness, is even ridiculed, by many; although it is a subject which one of the holy prophets had a commission from the Most High to treat of, as one of the effects of a deep revolt from him; and to denouncing impending judgments on account thereof. (Isaiah iii. 18 to 24.) Another, among wisdom's children in days of old, who tells the world he sought her whilst in youth, and that openly, by prayer in the temple, even from the flower till the grape was fully ripe, and that thus directing his soul unto her, he found her in pureness, this proficient in divine knowledge ventures to declare, that a man's *attire*, *gait*, and *excessive laughter* shew what he is; (Eccles. li. 13, 20—xix. 30) and if we add to this, the plain and positive injunctions of the apostles Paul and Peter, which as expressly forbid attention to the *adorning* of the person in what is worn, as the eighth Commandment prohibits increasing wealth by fraud in any thing that is done, must we not plainly see, that a follower of Christ is called upon to bear, by *example*, a full testimony against conformity to the spirit of the world, as it works in a vain glorious desire of significance and respectability from an appearance in fashionable apparel,

evidently the chief incentive to a much
attention thereto, than proper decer
quires. Respecting *plainness of speech*,
said, that *to a certain extent*, the proprie
was accordant with my judgment—it
but some time elapsed before I felt it ne
to adopt it so fully as Friends do; wha
close and deep consideration, concerni
ground on which they believe it right t
from others in this respect, was, to the
my recollection, nearly as follows: af
years seclusion from public places of w
(except when particularly invited to
my hours of retirement, which were the
and daily, it forcibly came to my view
course so ascetic, was not accordant,
with the spirit of the gospel, or the p
junctions of the Apostles, or the practic
lievers in any age of the church; br
union and fellowship appearing to be of t
essence of that spirit, which, breathing
will to all and loving without dissimulati
turally cares for the spiritual welfare of
and bears their burdens: opening my
these considerations, they soon pressed
tily, and my thoughts turned to religio
lowship: at the first glance that way,
ciety of Friends appeared to be the onl
could possibly join myself to: but in o
this, it was seen to be necessary that m

ment and practice should be altogether in conformity with theirs; and excepting *language*, they were nearly so; but the very *idea* of a change in this particular, caused such a shrinking, and almost dread of mind, as induced an attempt to sift and prove groundless, their arguments in proof of its being a genuine christian testimony against that corruption in speech, which, as to the letter, I could not deny to be very evident, in that commonly adopted; how far I evaded the force of what they advanced on the subject, or how soon I passed from that, to what the Scriptures contained as applicable to the point in question, I cannot now recollect, only, that ultimately, a diligent search in them, concerning the matter, was exclusively resorted to. The first passage that met, and arrested my attention, was the apostolic injunction to be in the use of "sound speech that cannot be condemned." This pressed and pinched in some degree at first, but I got from under its weight, by reasoning after this manner—Sound! that is surely so, which, proceeding from a heart without rottenness and divested of all deceit, seeks not to leave a false impression on the minds of hearers. But "hold fast the form of sound words" came from the same authority, and appearing to inculcate that substantial rectitude of heart, with every other effect of the light of Christ therein, should

shine forth in its native garb before otl
that in the real possession of truth *i*
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from *outwardly*; this, for a time, lay w
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peared to contain, in substance, noth
added to its force. I came at last to th
message unto his people through the
Malachi, charging them with such with
as was even robbery in his sight, an
was committed by keeping back "tit
offerings:" reflecting upon this charge
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nise, &c. were included, things as insi
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ty matters of the law, as a form of sou
could be to substantial truth in the
parts, and yet, that divine wisdom ma
of such importance as to condemn th
refused compliance with what was enjo
specting them, in the awful manner n
began to fear (I say, *to fear*) that Frien
right, and that it was my duty, as ar
dual, to join them in testimony against
ruptions crept into modern language, a
back to the primitive simplicity and p
of speech. A sore exercise of mind n
place, and whilst under it, falling in e
with a ministering friend from America
munication from his lips was as a seal

He addressed the company, some of whom had dropt our peculiar testimonies, nearly in this manner, "Robbery, Robbery! it is a crime of no small magnitude with respect to things pertaining to man: how great then is its turpitude, when the rights of the Most High are invaded, and the creature holds back what is due to the Creator! Some of old were charged even with this atrocity; they had the impudence to query, Wherein? but an answer was ready, in tithes and offerings." After this introduction, he enlarged on the subject, directing his matter particularly to an individual present, who stood disowned by the society; but when the company were about to separate, he noticed me; asked who I was, &c. on being told my name and a few particulars, he parted with me, after uttering these few words, "Well, William! bring all the tithes into the store house." Recurring to my previous exercise, thou wilt readily conceive the impression such an address must naturally leave on my mind; it was powerful indeed, and imprinted on it an indelible character. From this period, (1793) I had a fixed apprehension that I should fall short of divine requiring, if the cross was not submitted to, in respect of language, yet continued shrinking therefrom, and struggling with that which imposed it, for nearly two years, during which

time, many prayers, with tears, were offered up to a gracious God, for guidance in the matter, and for strength to bear all he might see meet to lay upon me for the reduction of my natural will, and the humiliation of my soul before him, and in the sight of man also; until at length, almost dreading to address him, in terms I feared to use when speaking to my fellow-creatures, in much trepidation of spirit I submitted to adopt, what Friends term, *the plain language;* whereby, another stumbling-block was removed out of my path. From this time (the year 1795) I attended their meetings regularly, and about three years after, on applying to be admitted a member of the Society, I was received as such, by the monthly meeting of my native city. W. L.

Here our dear friend ends his history, having fulfilled the request made to him for the leading circumstances of his life, prior to his becoming a member of the society of Friends, and apprehending that every thing of particular interest respecting him since that time, was known by the individual to whom he wrote, he considered it would be superfluous to continue his narrative beyond that period.

Before the reader proceeds, it may be well to pause, and contemplate the contents of the

preceding pages. There is something very pleasing in what he writes, respecting the impressions made on his mind at a very tender age, by the ray of light shed on those invaluable records, the holy Scriptures; manifesting the benefit which may accrue to the young (although very inexperienced) mind, from a frequent hearing, or perusal of them. But who, *without heart-felt emotions*, can read his after conflicts with the strong propensities of fallen nature, and behold the dreadful state into which he was plunged by disobedience to his religious convictions? surely the description he gives of his state at that time, should powerfully arrest the attention of those who, in like manner, are pursuing lying vanities and sinful gratifications; yet seeking, though in vain, to hide themselves from the all-seeing eye. Thus did our beloved friend; but in the depth of unutterable distress, he happily turned with full purpose of heart, unto him from whom he had so deeply revolted, by whose gracious assistance he was enabled to break off from his sins; made willing to bear the *consequent reproaches* of his former companions, and openly to take up his cross; following in the way of self-denial, his crucified Lord, and in adorable mercy partaking of the pardoning love of God in Christ Jesus.

Although it does not appear that he kept,

for any long time, a regular diary, yet we find something of this kind for a short space, in the year 1807, which seems worthy of notice, inasmuch as it manifests an abiding concern to walk circumspectly, and to attain to that degree of christian perfection, wherein is known a divine communion between the soul and its Creator. We therefore give the following extracts from his manuscripts.

1807, 9th Mo. 18th. At meeting; which was held in silence; but (as respects myself) not in the silence of all flesh: afterwards, I departed from meekness in a matter of business, with some, who from circumstances, were entitled to christian forbearance; and I was brought low when I thought thereon, and favoured to supplicate with tears, for mercy and help, against anger, my soul's master-enemy—became calm, and somewhat humbled at my little progress in humility. On my pillow; praised be the Lord, who permits the enjoyment of every thing needful for the support of the *outward* tabernacle! may the *inner* man stay upon his almighty arm of living power continually!

19th. Who hath begotten the drops of the dew? no human power. I was this morning renewedly convinced, whilst feeling after that which sometimes qualifies to offer the early sacrifice, and to pour forth a prayer to the

God of my life—preserved from impatience, though not in complete resignation.

20th. Something solemn covered my mind the hours before breakfast—the meetings silent—supped with a friend, and afterwards a portion of Scripture was read to the family and servants—no exhortation afterwards, but was led to ponder a little on what I have oft-times pondered before, viz. the injunction, "Exhort one another daily:" this pre-supposes daily qualification for spiritual communication, in those who are spiritually alive: What then is thy state, Oh my soul! seeing wisdom is so seldom fitting for thy lips? Leanness, leanness; from leaguing too much with the treacherous dealers!

23d. In the house all the day, through bodily indisposition—endeavoured to feel after him in whose presence alone, not only the "fulness of joy," but every degree of heavenly refreshment is experienced. What is the reason, Oh my soul! thou enjoyest so little thereof? Is not this the cause? The Lord is in his holy temple, but the heart is infested with the thieves which rob him of his glory and pollute the place, which, if pure, he would make his sanctuary; so that thou canst partake of glances only, of his tender favour and holy presence, which, in amazing condescension, he, at times, vouchsafes: Oh may the cry be yet more car-

nest, to be purged, though with hyssop, that I may be clean, and so pure in heart, as to see and walk with my God!

24th. Opened my eyes this morning, in a frame of spirit, wherein there was a facility in turning inward—in the course of the day, intermeddled to my hurt in some business, and the tender covering of my mind was in some degree defiled—in the evening watch, was favoured with quiet, and enabled to pour forth my prayers to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to be raised up into that precious life hid with him in that eternal power which brought him again from death; into which he entered, that, passing triumphantly through it, he might not only destroy the same, but him also who had the power thereof; thus, making way for all, who by faith, lay hold of his victorious power, to obtain deliverance from that sore bondage, in which the fear and power of this dreadful death holds all who remain in the nature of the first man Adam, by whom it entered and passed upon every individual soul. The consideration of our great Redeemer's suffering process, somewhat appalled and humbled me, under the remembrance of the transient effect hitherto, of these impressions on my poor mind.

25th. At Thornbury meeting, and was engaged therein to press the necessity of dili-

gence and earnest search after the pearl of great price—returned the next day, and was *providentially* relieved from perplexity, respecting a secular matter. How graciously doth the great Controller of events manifest himself to those who trust in his wisdom and power, even in things appertaining to this life! Opening a way, where (to our view) we were encompassed as with a hedge of thorns, and no prospect before us of an escape without hurt.—"Trust in him at all times, ye people! pour out your hearts before him!"

27th. At Lawrence Weston meeting, and had a view of the necessity of participating in the joy of our Lord, in order to our real strength and confidence in him; in the hearing of some visited minds the most gracious promise was revived, "The meek shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel." May he, who, although he is great, despiseth not any who offer before him with purity of intention, be pleased to accept and bless the feeble endeavours of a poor creature, to stir up his fellow professors to love and good works.

28th. Having lodged at Henbury, a religious opportunity with part of a family in the village, early presented to my mind and looked pleasant, secretly breathing that way might open to it, if consistent with divine wisdom—the path

thereto was made quite plain, and I felt engaged to hold up to view, the blessed state of the Israel of God; the redeemed of the Lord Jesus; believing that some present were convinced of and enamoured with "the beauty of holiness." Oh! may their love be chaste and constant! Returned to my home in peace. In my evening retirement, under a feeling of weakness, qualification was in some degree witnessed, to crave mercy and help from the Lord Most High.

29th. At our monthly meeting; not watchful enough over an impatient spirit, which rises when any thing unsavoury, or even irrelevant, is offered; Oh! that my mind could attain the bright clothing of humility! then should I better bear with the weakness of my brethren. May the Lord in mercy cause the word to go forth "take away the filthy garments from him!"

30th. In the multitude of my thoughts, something softening was felt, and continued with me; went forth to my worldly engagements in the spirit of supplication, and was kept until the evening in a peaceful calm—at a friend's house was enabled to offer an evening sacrifice, in which the necessity of watching, in order to witness a qualification for prayer, was (I trust in the love of truth) closely pressed on some visited minds present;

retired in the hope that I had not been out of my place.

10th Mo. 1st. Favoured this morning to supplicate, and in adorable mercy, preserved in the quiet during the day—the evening watch was heavy at first, but did not end, before some breathing to the God of my life was witnessed, not only for my own soul, but also for all, every where, who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity.

2nd. No morning sacrifice, except such as I was capable of offering in the midst of outward concerns, wherein I was engaged early, for the purpose of rendering to Cæsar what appeared to be his due: the path of duty is the only way of safety, in whatever direction it may lie; happy they who attend to *divine* pointings, and go strait forward on their way, regardless of their own will, and fleshly wisdom; when these walk, they do not stumble. In my evening retirement a degree of what I take to be *religious sensibility*, was experienced; in which, drawing near to the foot of the altar, I supplicated for mercy and help for the Israel of God.

3d. This day commenced under circumstances similar to the preceding: in the course of it, a little trial evinced my weakness to be still great; but blessed for ever be the Lord of mercy and of strength, it did not so far pre-

vail, as "to give place to the devil," by yielding to his wrathful spirit, which has too often been the case heretofore, to the shame and confusion of my face; under which, most bitter anguish has been tasted. My soul hath in remembrance the savour of the wormwood and the gall, and desires to magnify that holy name which is indeed a strong tower, when so loved, as to suffer in meekness, rather than grieve the spirit of a lowly Redeemer. The time of the evening watch was observed in *outward* retirement and quiet, but not favoured with that which scatters the multitude of thoughts, and enables to pour forth the soul's complaint—was strengthened to bear this barren season without fretting.

To-morrow will be the first day of the week; if permitted to see it, may it please the author and giver of all good, to be near, and to favour me with preservation.

4th. Oh thou that hearest prayer! most gracious and condescending Father of mercies! I desire to bless and praise thy holy name for all thy goodness to my soul; which thou hast redeemed with the precious blood of Christ Jesus, whom I desire, in the obedience of faith, to call my Lord, and to follow as he is pleased to lead. Amen and Amen!! Thus far, under some sense of my last night's petition being *answered*, in that I had sweet access by prayer

his morning, to the fountain of life—after-
wards went to meeting in a softened state,
and heard a testimony in which the query,
"What manner of persons ought ye to be?"
was closely pressed upon all—may it be daily
put to my soul with piercing energy.

12th Mo. 16th. Various circumstances have
occasioned a chasm for many days in this re-
cord; some of them awfully instructive and
deeply humiliating; in adverting thereto, may
my soul bow in solemn reverence before him,
whose righteous dealings with, and tender
mercy towards a poor rebellious creature,
have been renewedly manifested: so that, of
mercy and judgment I have abundant cause
to sing. The first hindrance to my continuing
the record regularly, was bodily indisposition,
in which, I was favoured with some degree of
resignation to the fatherly rod of correction,
and made sensible of my need thereof; as also
of the gentleness of the hand that numbered
the strokes: in this frame of mind I was
strengthened quietly to commit body and spirit
into his hand who formed and sustains both;
believing that he is not only Lord of heaven,
but of the earth also; who can still heal all
maladies of soul and body in those who apply to
his divine power, in that simplicity of faith
and love which those possessed, who addressed
the blessed Saviour when personally on earth

after this manner, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." "Speak the word only and thy servant shall be healed." "If I may but touch the hem of his garment I shall be whole," &c. &c. Strengthened in this my faith, I put up my petition to the God of all my mercies, who was pleased to hear and to answer my prayer—blessed and magnified be his holy name for ever!

After this, I allowed myself a little quiet retreat in the country, where, disengaged from outward hindrances, I was favoured with a degree of inward calm, and therein had sweet access to the God of all consolation, who renews the strength of all who wait humbly upon him: but in about two weeks after my return, it pleased him in whose hand is the breath of every living thing, in his inscrutable wisdom, to visit my dwelling with a deeply affecting stroke, taking out of time into eternity, after a short illness, the youngest of my family, a promising youth in his nineteenth year: this was felt in the creaturely part very acutely, but resignation to the divine will was maintained, accompanied with thankfulness, in the belief that he was taken from the evil to come; much of which, it was obvious from peculiar circumstances, if he had lived, would have assailed him, and have rendered his path *very slip*pery. Another cause of thankfulness,

was the nature of his disease (water on the brain) which in all human probability, had he continued in existence, would have caused great suffering, without hope of relief. Thus are we given sometimes "to see in part" the goodness of the Lord, even in his painful dispensations to us his creatures. May my soul deepen in reverent humility and gratitude before him for all his goodness to me! After this I again had some retirement from secular concerns; during which, my hope in the redeeming, cleansing power of that "blood which speaketh better things than that of Abel," was a little brightened, in the prospect of becoming thereby a companion of, and partaker with, those who being washed therein from their sins, attain "the white stone and new name," which is known only by those who overcome and receive it. Oh that I may henceforth so faithfully follow the great Captain of salvation and manfully fight under his banner against my soul's enemies, as (through his strength) daily to experience the house of Saul to become weaker and weaker; until all within me that is at enmity with the pure will of my God, be subdued! so that his kingdom may indeed come, and the righteous government of his Christ be fully established, by all his foes becoming his footstool. Amen! Amen!

The foregoing was written about eight years

before his decease: we believe it may be considered as a fair specimen of his concern to the end. Frequent allusions may be observed to what he terms, "the morning and evening sacrifice;" meaning thereby, the hours of private devotional retirement, which it was both his practice and delight to set apart for that purpose. In his general deportment and engagements, civil and religious, he evinced marks of the real christian; redeemed, in a more than common degree, from the love of earthly things, we believe it may be truly said of him, that he was "an example to the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, and in purity." In private life, a warm and faithful friend—a sympathizer with the afflicted whether in body or in mind, and ready to help them, as far as in his power; of a truly catholic spirit, his love was far from being limited by the borders of his own religious profession—wherever sincerity of heart and a real desire after christian purity appeared, there went his heart also; to such was the hand of christian fellowship extended; nevertheless, he stood firm to his own religious principles, and when occasion required, was bold in opposing, or declining what he could not unite with.

Having experimentally known the operation *of the* word of life in his own heart, he felt

himself constrained to declare unto others what God had done for his soul; to invite them by those mercies which he had witnessed, to come, taste and see, how good the Lord is; as also, by those *terrors* of which he had so largely partaken, to warn the rebellious; and for about nine years before his decease, he thus stood among his fellow members in the station of a minister. In the exercise of his gift, his chief concern appeared to be to gather to the Beloved of Souls. He was often engaged in the line of consolation to those who had to struggle with many inward conflicts, and enabled to impart to such, a word in season; but a very different class were also not unfrequently, the objects of his labours; those who were either settled upon their lees, or in open rebellion against the divine law written on the heart; pressing on such, the necessity of closing in with the offers of divine goodness and mercy, whilst "the day of visitation" lasted; and of striving to attain to that state of inward purity which stands accepted in the divine sight.

His labours in the ministry were principally in and around his native city, but about nine months before his decease (after a remarkable recovery from extreme illness) he paid a religious visit, with the concurrence of his friends at home, to the meetings of Friends in Lincolnshire, Derbyshire, and some parts of York-

shire and Lancashire, much to the edification of those he visited and to his own peace. Among some memorandums made as he went along, are the following remarks, which appear worthy of notice. In one place, feeling his mind oppressed, under an apprehension of the prevalence of a worldy spirit, he thus writes, "Oh what an oppressor of the precious Seed, is a worldly trafficking spirit! how does it fetter the soul in its prison-house of darkness, so that no living desires can burst the way to God on high! as I advance, I think I discover this spirit has carried into captivity, and holds in bondage. I fear the love of money is not seen to be so bitter a root as it really is, but that, on the contrary, it is too much indulged, even to the hardening of the heart."

On humility, he observes, "What a beautiful garment for the spirit of man is humility! true genuine humility! how invaluable the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit! Surely these are garments in which all should be clothed, and in some degree shine forth, who go in and out with acceptance, before the Lord's people; giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed, but even if defamed, to intreat."

On the conducting of our discipline, he makes the following remark: "In the execution of *the discipline*, there must be firmness, and

meetings have a right to expect, particularly from their clerk, the preservation of the most decorous order, without any respect of persons: here, the dignity of the meeting, and not individual feeling, is the point; and tenacity respecting it becomes incumbent; but as to what relates to individual respectability, if our brethren do not always fully and unanimously acknowledge our services, it is better secretly to take comfort that "although Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not," we have, nevertheless, a Father in heaven; rather than openly to make our boast of him, in such a manner as to seem to be above the judgment of our brethren."

On his return from this journey in the latter part of the year 1815, he delivered to the monthly meeting the certificate it had granted him; acknowledging in a humble manner, the kind reception he had experienced among Friends where his lot had been cast, and expressing reverent thankfulness for divine support in some exercising seasons—noticing also, the satisfaction he had felt in going along, that although the state of meetings in some places was discouraging, he had observed many hopeful young people, who, among other engagements, were laudably employed in giving to the lowest orders of civil society, the benefits of a moral and religious education,

although necessarily in a very limited degree; desiring that all such might be preserved on the right ground, both in this and any other concern of a public nature; believing as he did, that much watchfulness was necessary, whilst thus uniting with persons of different religious persuasions, in the promotion of the public good.

After this, he was very little from home; for in about three months, symptoms of his former disease again appeared, and in the 5th Mo. 1816, had so increased, as to have assumed a very decided character, leaving little hope of his recovery. He was preserved in great patience under bodily sufferings; *fully* resigned to the divine will; much drawn to inward retirement and secret supplication; yet expressing, at times, a continued solicitude for his fellow members in religious society, that they might become more and more a spiritually minded people. In unison with this, are the following lines, written by himself, a short time before his decease, and addressed to the same individual to whom he gave the preceding account of his early life. They are very descriptive of his concern in time of health and active service, and manifest the continuance thereof, to the end of his day, viz. "I continue confirmed in the belief, that the prin*ciples of* Friends approach nearer the truth,

and hold forth the spirituality of our Saviour's doctrines and offices, in a more clear manner, than those of any other religious society; open, I trust notwithstanding, to the import and force of the apostolic declaration, that in him, uncircumcision availeth no more than circumcision; unless the new creature be quickened and formed in us. My prayer, both for myself and friends, is, that we may be willing, so to die to all that is of the old man with his deeds in us, as that the pure nature may be revived, whose life is hid with Christ in God."

"Clear representations may be made to, and viewed by, the eye of the understanding; but unless the heart be, in a good degree, redeemed from earthly desires and cares, from fleshly wisdom and creaturely interests, it cannot fully become that house of prayer in which the soul is made joyful in its God; but cleansed from these, it is in a state of preparation for union and communion with the pure fountain of light and life; and continuing so, will doubtless attain thereto, through the mediatorial operation of Christ; even in the nearness held forth in that gracious promise, which hath in it, all the intelligent spirit is capable of attaining in this life, namely, "I will walk in them, and dwell in them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God."

On the 7th day of the 6th Month, 1816, he was released from the troubles and conflicts of time, and his remains were interred in the Friends' burial ground at the Friars, Bristol, on the 15th of the same. The funeral was attended by many of his fellow citizens, in addition to those of his own Society; manifesting thereby, their esteem for one whom they had long known and respected.

The following Extracts from Letters, written by our late dear friend, to sundry persons in different situations and on divers occasions, are thus brought to public view, from the belief that they contain much valuable matter, which may be instructive to many, besides those to whom they were particularly addressed.

To a young woman who had recently joined the Society of Friends, and residing in a very respectable family (not of that persuasion) in the station of a Tutoress.

Dear Friend,

I TRUST a right feeling for thy spiritual welfare prompts to communication in this way and at this time. It has pleased the Father of mercies, the one eternal source of all that constitutes the good of intelligent spirits, to visit thy

soul with the emanations of his divine light, and to draw thee with that love which from everlasting has been towards all, and in the fulness of time was manifested in the gift of his beloved Son, whom he freely gave for the recovery of his lost creatures, as the efficacious means of their restoration to that blessed state in which our first parents were created. This love, my dear friend, thou hast felt; the arising and spreading of this light thou hast witnessed, manifesting more and more the darkness in which it shineth; and, although in its searching operation, when the hidden things of Esau have been sought out, thou hast been dismayed at their strength, and fears have prevailed that the precious seed in thee, which wrestles for the blessing, is too weak to stand against its mighty foes; that before the night pass, and the day dawn, they will prevail, and the crown of victory which Israel's God giveth to those whose language is, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me," will never be set on thy head; yet he that "giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might increaseth strength," hath (I trust) covered thy head in the day of battle, and renewedly anointing the precious shield of faith, hath enabled thee to lift up thy soul in hope, and at times to adopt the language "I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance." Amen! saith my whole

heart. May thy labour be unremitting, thy prayer unceasing, to be admitted to that nearness unto him who is the "life of men," in which, not only healing virtue, but almighty strength is witnessed! that partaking of its energy, thou mayst become "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might;" then, though "an host should encamp against thee, thou wilt not fear," thy confidence will continue whilst one thing only is sought for, and a dwelling in the house of thy God continues to be the inheritance thy soul longeth after. Oh let nothing be ever cherished inwardly, or conformed to outwardly, that has the least tendency to abate the ardour of this longing! May thy love to God thy Saviour so increase, as to produce a willingness to forsake all for his sake; and as thy convenant was made, so may it be from time to time renewed, even "with sacrifice!" Let every thing that may yet be required, be offered *willingly*, so wilt thou come to know the Lord to be thy guide, and thy soul becoming as a watered garden, "the spices will flow out," and the sweet savour becoming so diffusive as to fill the house with its precious odour, the minds of the dear youth around thee may feel a longing desire to taste and see how good the Lord is to those who are truly and fully devoted to him.

Thou hast been strengthened to turn thy

feet into the way of the cross, and disregarding the shame, hast evinced thy attachment to a despised and rejected Saviour, by suffering him to lead thee (step by step) into *such* a confession of him before men, as makes thee a kind of spectacle in the eyes of the "wise and prudent;" and hath not he who ordaineth praise from even babes and sucklings, eminently manifested his gracious acceptance of thy sacrifices? Surely the language "Let her alone," seems to have gone forth impressively concerning thee, and Oh! may this be ultimately added, "she hath done what she could." Under a conviction of the insufficiency of signs to convey the thing signified, and the inconsistency of having recourse to shadows, with a professed belief that the substance is in very deed come, thou hast joined the only religious society which seems to act consistently with such a faith: may this step tend to thy growth in spirituality, and to the help of thy companions! in order to this, remember that "one is thy master;" keep thine eye to the standard of purity he has inwardly held up to thy view; look not without, I earnestly and affectionately intreat thee; avoid the error of those formerly, who, we read, "measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, were not wise." Keep in view the only true pattern, the great

exemplar; even him who hath declared himself to be "the light of the world;" and who hath instructed us, that following him is the only way to be preserved from stumbling; "in all thy ways therefore acknowledge him." In whatever thou allowest thyself, inwardly or outwardly, in the application of thy talents, let the point for consideration be, not how far any great name among professors is easy to allow this or that, but simply, whether it accords with that mind which was in Christ Jesus, and with his outward walk among men. Oh! how have I desired that every awakened mind would keep close to that which visits it, and in the day of its blessed power and heart-softening influence, adopt the conduct of the holy Apostle, who tells us, he went not to any that were anointed before him, but, bowing before his great Master, was only concerned to know *his* will; putting up this petition, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" but, alas! I fear that some, when the fervour of their first love has abated, and their constancy has been tried with chilling wintery winds, have relaxed from this simple earnest application of the heart unto God for that holy sweet intercourse he hath drawn them into with himself, the fountain of light and love, and gradually sliding into the track of others, have at length become contented with going *their* pace; and thus halt-

ing where those halt, are settled down in a rest, which is not of the Lord's preparing, but being polluted, they have their enemies for their lords; their captivity is manifest, and the rattle of their chains audible, even to "ears dull of hearing," although they vainly boast of the "glorious liberty of the sons of God." From the time a ray of divine light shone brightly in my mind to the present day, the Church hath appeared clearly to my view, as in a fallen state; and although in stepping out of the common track, hard thoughts, and even the imputation of self-conceit and an assumption of superior sanctity, may fall on us, yet I verily believe that if we attain true christianity, we must not relax from earnestly aspiring and striving after a far more holy state, than what is commonly accounted (even by high professors) a safe one. Under this conviction, thou wilt not be surprised at my being thus plain and pressing in a matter unspeakably interesting and important. Consider then, what is here said; and may the Lord give thee a right understanding in all things: so prays one who on all occasions desires to be unto thee and all mankind, A FRIEND.

To the same.

My dear young friend, I beseech thee to prize, as inestimably precious, that degree of the love of God thy Saviour, which in the riches of his mercy hath drawn thy heart hitherto, and has enlightened thy mind to see "Vanity of vanities," and "vexation of spirit," in every form and manner of life that is not holy and dedicated to him. I say, prize it; watch over it; clear away every thing *within*, and deny thyself of all *without*, which, like dead rubbish on a spark of kindled fire, will prevent its getting sufficient strength to give forth warmth and lustre. Oh! I am persuaded the true love of a crucified Redeemer, is that alone which can deliver us from the spirit of this world and the various machinations of our subtle enemy, who will indeed find much to work upon in every one of us, until our hearts can say to their impartial Searcher, "Thou knowest that I love thee." This ardent love many waters cannot quench; but, all zeal about religious matters *without* it, will sooner or later cool, and ultimately be as the candle of the wicked, "put out."

The deceitfulness of the human heart coming fresh in my view, has led me to impart this counsel, not as though I had no occasion for it myself—Oh no! but as in stirring up

that which is pure in our friends, we are naturally led a little into ourselves, mutual benefit is sometimes derived.

Desire the young people that know me, to accept my tender love, particularly * * * *, towards whom my heart has yearned in that which longs for the salvation of precious immortal souls.

FAREWELL!

To a very young person, piously inclined.

To a "little one" of the "little flock," whose Shepherd the Lord himself is; and concerning whom he hath commanded, "Feed my lambs."

In a degree of that love which needs not personal knowledge and intercourse for its birth or growth, but without regard to outward circumstances flows freely to all who call on the name of the Lord Jesus in truth and sincerity; a poor halting follower of, and feeble advocate for, the holy Lamb of God, salutes thee, dear precious child, as one under the notice of the Father of mercies, the God of all true consolation; the strong and sweet drawings of whose love to thy immortal spirit, thou hast sensibly felt, exciting desires after a participation of the present peace of his children,

and the attainment of a good hope through grace, of those future joys which await them within the pearl gates of the paradise of God. These longing desires, dear child! thou hast been favoured to feel, and under their influence, prayers have flowed from thy tender heart unto God for his gracious help and preservation, that (strengthened by his holy arm of power) thou mayst be enabled to renounce the pomps and vanities of the present perishing world, with all the sinful desires of the flesh, and *so* to acknowledge thy Saviour before men, by a cheerful obedience to his holy commandments, as to obtain a sense of his gracious acceptance, and the soul-cheering persuasion that thou wilt be owned by him when he shall appear with his holy angels, amply to reward those who, for the heavenly joy set before them, endure the cross, despising the shame; whom he will then give a place with him in the realms of unfading glory. Believe, my dear, with the fullest confidence, that thy prayers are heard; thy tears regarded; that he who sent this gracious message to the young king of Judah, who early sought the favour of his God, "Because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, and didst weep before me, I have heard thee also, saith the Lord;" believe, I say, *that he* hath his eyes upon thee for good, and

will most assuredly continue his loving favour and vouchsafe his all-sufficient help unto thee, if on thy part, his fear becomes thy chiefest treasure, and the language of thy heart unto him the searcher thereof, is on this wise, "What is there on earth that I desire beside thee?" He will be a light to thy feet, clearly shewing thee the way wherein thou shouldest walk; so guiding thee by his counsel as to fit and prepare thee ultimately to be received to glory. Be of good cheer, therefore, dear little sister! be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, which he now most graciously affords thee; and take comfort in a firm persuasion "that he who hath begun a good work in thy heart will perform it until the day of Christ," that he will never leave thee nor forsake thee, until he hath done that which by his still small voice of love, he hath spoken to thee of; but giving thee strength according to thy day, will enable thee to hold on thy way and wax stronger and stronger, so that (though difficulties may, as thou goest on, be felt within and encountered from without) thou wilt find thy dear Redeemer's grace fully sufficient, and have in *humble* confidence to say, I can do all things required of me, "through Christ strengthening me:" and remember he is not, as slothful servants represent him, a hard master, requiring much,

where he hath given little; but is so condescending to the *sincere* heart, as to accept even what is comparable to the poor widow's two mites, when it is all it hath to offer: so very tender also is his care over his "little flock," that in holy writ he is compared to a gentle and good shepherd, who feeds his sheep with a most endearing discrimination, regarding particularly the young and weak; as it is written, (and may thy soul feel enriching joy from the words) "He shall gather the lambs in his arms and carry them in his bosom." Yea, they are the precious objects of his everlasting love; purchased at no less a price than his own blood, and having so loved these his own which are in the world, he loves them unto the end, and gives them eternal life; having declared concerning such, "they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." And now in the view of this adorable love to, and care over us, may the language of our hearts be, in humble confidence, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Let us also keep in mind that our heavenly Father is all-wise, holy and good; and as in order to our being fitted to enjoy his presence, it is absolutely necessary our hearts should be made pure, so he sees meet, at seasons, to chasten those whom he loves; appearing inwardly in the *temple of* our hearts, as Christ our Lord did in

that of Jerusalem, with a whip of small cords, in order to expel every thing that robs him of his glory, by taking too much of our affections from him, and thereby disqualifying us for that holy intercourse which is enjoyed in prayer and supplication to him; Oh! let us keep this in mind; lest when we are visited by the fatherly rod, we should be too much discouraged; think our Lord hath utterly forsaken us, and that he hath in anger shut up his tender mercies and loving kindness from us: at the same time let us carefully watch and pray, lest we be tempted to violate our vows of dutiful obedience to him, by denying him in the hour of trial, as Peter did, and thereby introduce ourselves into that bitter sorrow which accompanies a sense of disobedience and ingratitude, in minds that have been favoured with tokens of their Master's love: yet should this be the case with thee at any time, remember thou hast to do with a God who delighteth in mercy, and retaineth not anger against his poor children, encompassed with infimities which he well knows; but is always ready to forgive those who penitently return to him; to heal their backslidings and to love them freely. Lastly, place all thy dependance upon the power of the Most High, inwardly discovering to thee, through the light of his dear Son Christ Jesus, the deformity of a vain and

worldy spirit, and holding up to the view of thy mind "the beauties of holiness:" day by day pray to him for ability to hate the one and cleave to the other; beg earnestly of him to dispose thy mind to obedience in all which he hath convinced thee is well pleasing in his sight; remembering his reply to one who exclaimed "Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked," "Yea, rather blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it." Now, dear child! I affectionately bid thee farewell. Love to thy immortal part led to this communication; it will also insure thee a continuance of the prayers I now offer to the fountain of all good, for thy advancement in the path of present peace, and road to eternal glory.

To the daughter of an intimate friend, in her last illness.

"VERY pleasant hast thou been to me," said one in ancient times, concerning a much-loved friend, between whom and himself, a recent and final separation had (in unerring wisdom) been permitted.

May I not adopt similar language in addressing thee, my dear young friend, under the recollection of feelings excited in past

recourse, and say, pleasant, interestingly
sant, hast thou been to my heart, on seve-
accounts. Whilst viewing thee, things
and present have been blended in my
l with impressive force, and as it has thus
, strange would it be, if *under present cir-
stances*, all within me capable of affection-
nterest, were not awakened into deep and
y solicitude on thy account; which over-
ing all that is limited by time, extends to
ighest concerns, and embraces the awful-
leasing contemplation of thy relationship
n heavenly Father, and birth-right in
ist Jesus (our common salvation) to his
ious and eternal kingdom. It would be
nge, indeed, my dear friend, could I *now*
indifferent respecting these thy great in-
sts, as wholly to withhold the mention of
to thee in some manner; and now, whilst
are full in my view, with all the love my
is enabled to feel, I beseech thee, let them
ot only thy *chief* but *sole* concern—labour
trovert thy mind into such deep and solemn
emplation on them, as to swallow up all
is of an inferior nature; in which exer-
(faithfully and patiently maintained)
holy Redeemer, the light of all mankind,
not only discover to thee in what thy alie-
on from the divine nature consists, as a
d of the "first Adam;" but will also kindle

in the ground of thy heart, fervent and availing supplications for restoration in him "the second Adam," by the effectual working of his power, as a "quickening spirit," creating in thee "a new heart and a new spirit," according to his promise, in adorable mercy, to all who truly humble their souls before him, and who, for his sake, renounce all that is earthly and creaturely. Oh how great the work! even for those whose first pursuits have not been of a gross kind, but whom, the soft and seemingly refined creaturely attractions have drawn and held fast: I wish it to appear so to thee, dear child! not to create dismay, but to make way for a conviction of the necessity of divine almighty assistance for its completion; that in this view of it, thou mayst trust in the Lord alone for help, and neither lean upon thine own understanding, nor on that of any other creature.—Oh take heed of looking without thee! much danger is in it; neither let any person or thing engage *much* of thy precious time and attention; but when necessarily relaxed from deep exercise, peruse the holy scriptures; thy holy Redeemer's doctrines and commands will illuminate thy judgment; the precious promises contained in the prophets, will cheer thy hopes; and the holy breathings of the Lord's servants in former times (particularly *those* of the "sweet Psalmist" of Israel) will

open to thy view the state of mind into which real religion introduceth, and what thou art called to aspire after. There happens, I believe, a season to all the Lord's seeking children, when even things *lawful*, are far, very far from being *expedient;* happy then are they who, fully obeying their Master's call, whether to come up to Tabor's mount or to watch with him in Gethsemane's garden, escape the rebuke of "Sleepest thou?" "Couldest thou not watch with me one hour?" avoiding also the danger of falling into similar unfaithfulness to that of him who was brought even to "weep bitterly."

That thou mayst be of these obedient few, hath been and still is, my wish and desire, and in conformity thereto, some caution has appeared proper, in taking up any of thy precious moments *personally*, endeavouring to do as I have found it profitable to be done unto when under bodily afflictions, even to be left alone, to turn my face to the wall, and to pray to the Lord of mercy for his all-sustaining help and comfort.

Thus much then and no further, in this way, except to assure thee, sweet offspring of my beloved friend! that with all the ardour my heart is capable of feeling, I pray for thy experiencing such purification in the present furnace of trial, as it is graciously designed

to effect, that when unerring wisdom shall see meet to bring thee up therefrom, thy soul may be "clothed in white raiment," and thou be joined to the "pure in heart" who "see God."

To an individual awakened to serious reflections, and under some trying circumstances.

My dear Friend,

THY letter received some time since, was acceptable, as it evinced thy attention to that, which we read, maketh manifest all that is reproveable, and which the holy Apostle, as well as the *lip of truth* itself, termed "light." The discoveries which this holy and pure power first makes to us, of our inward darkness and defilement, and the feeling of our utter inability to deliver ourselves, brings the sincere soul into very painful sensibility, and sometimes into the utmost perplexity, and this too often greatly increased, from an impatience natural to all, under the pressure of affliction and sorrow; nevertheless, although our apprehension no way is to be found our escape, and refuge from this trouble fa yet I believe the arm of almighty power near, and though not immediately "m bare," secretly supports the true hearte all the tribulation, through which, even s

must pass, before they can witness an entrance into that peace which is only effected by "the work of righteousness," and enjoy that state of quietness and assurance of the Lord's favour, which is the portion of his children, and which, in due season, they reap if they "faint not" under his chastening hand. Think it not strange then, my dear friend! concerning any fiery trial which thy heavenly Father may appoint or permit to try thy fidelity and obedience to his pure will; but rather rejoice if he calls thee to be a follower of him who was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;" and who, though a son, yea, the holy Son of God, yet being found in fashion as a man, "learned obedience by the things which he suffered," and was made perfect thereby. In all states then, and under all circumstances, inward and outward, let this be the language of thy heart, the cup which my heavenly Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?

I rejoice in the belief that thy mind is measurably quickened by divine power, and in the hope that thou wilt continue to cherish the good desires excited therein, and yield full obedience to the manifestations of truth, rejecting all conference with flesh and blood. Oh then, that thou mayst thank thy God for what he has already done for thee, and take courage to believe that he will give thee grace

sufficient for thy day, and strength to support under the heat thereof! Labour after calmness and patience under whatever may assail thee, and earnestly pray to thy God for an increase of living faith, and true resignation to his will.

Thy present circumstances are certainly deeply afflictive, and very trying, and thou standest in need of something superior to human aid, to support and enable thee to act wisely in going in and out before those to whom duty calls thee to minister under their bodily sufferings. Accept my friendly sympathy and sincere wishes for thy best welfare, and be assured of this infallible truth, that all things, sooner or later, will be known to work together for good, to those who truly love and serve God; and that every son and daughter whom he may have scourged before he received, will ultimately acknowledge with the Psalmist, his goodness and his wisdom, and be enabled to adopt the language "It is good for me that I have been afflicted."

FAREWELL!

To a religiously disposed young man, inclining to join the Society of Friends.

THE interest excited in my mind during *personal* intercourse we have had heretof

and which has been chiefly directed to what relates to thy eternal welfare, now kindles with more than usual strength, on being made acquainted with thy present exercises and views; and under the feeling thereof, I in brotherly love take up my pen. My heart is glad in the hope it cherishes of thy standing open to the manifestations of divine light, and yielding full obedience to all its requirings, in the gradual unfoldings of thy heavenly Father's good, acceptable and perfect will concerning thee. This hope, I say, is cherished by me, seeing thou hast already beheld the necessity of non-conformity to the present evil world, both in its pomps and vanities, and superstitious forms, &c. in spiritual things, in order to that renewal of mind which must be witnessed before we can clearly distinguish the voice of the good Shepherd of Israel from that of the stranger. Thus much has been seen, and the blessed resolution formed to desist from further conference with flesh and blood, by yielding obedience to the heavenly vision, and daring for Christ's sake to become a fool in the estimation of the wise of this world. Regardless, then of these without, and resisting what impedes within, "Go in this thy might." "Make straight steps to thy feet." "In all thy ways acknowledge him," who is drawing thee to himself; be not discouraged if the way which may be opened *before* thee appear rough, and there

shouldst see but few travelling therein; confide in the promise "thy shoes shall be iron and brass, and as thy day is, so shall thy strength be." The present appears to me to be a time of most gracious visitation to thee; the day indeed which the Lord hath made; in which he hath passed by and looked upon thee, and sweetly revealed himself unto thee. Oh! mayst thou return love for love, whilst this day of power continues, seeing it is only therein that willingness is effected in our souls to make covenant with the Lord, by such sacrifices as he may require. To a heart *fully* yielded to this divine attraction, nothing will appear too dear to part with, nor any thing too painful to endure for the sake of him who hath purchased us at the price of his own precious blood. Love is strong as death; many waters cannot quench it, neither can floods drown it; but that death which hath passed on all men will ever be found a power that nothing but *love* can dethrone; from which such waters will flow as can and do quench all creaturely fire and zeal in every form. Now then, dear friend! is thy time to arise and be doing; shake thyself from the dust of the earth, and to "loose thyself from the bands of thy neck and follow on to know the deliverer of Sion; now is thy time to bind the sacrifice with cords *even to* the horns of the altar, and to as

after a part and lot with those who have both heard and obeyed the call "Gather my saints together unto me, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." Oh! I do believe that if the called of the Lord in this day, did but unreservedly give up their hearts to him, and in simplicity rely on his living power within them, they would soon become wiser than their teachers, and the light of the divine quickening word would shine forth with a lustre which would eclipse much of what now appears as gospel brightness in the eyes of many; but, alas! the cry of "Lo here!" or "lo there!" is more listened to than the voice which *first* called; the first love which was felt under its precious influences abates, and a settlement in systematic divinity and observances of man's invention, mixed with levitical ordinances, too often constitute a rest, far short of that which is prepared for the children of God. In this view of things, it is a peculiar satisfaction to me, that thou art disposed to make way in thy heart for the reception of gospel truth unmixed with creaturely conceptions, and hast formed the wise purpose of acting upon the declaration "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing;" of waiting for, and listening to him that "speaketh from heaven," whose word is with power; being, as he himself declared, "Spirit

and Life." This does indeed give me great satisfaction, having long been convinced beyond the shadow of a doubt, that nothing short of this living power can dislodge Satan from our hearts, or dispossess the world and the flesh, of their hold on our affections and desires; and having been thus taught in adorable mercy to step a little forward in the new and living way, and seeing Truth itself hath declared there is no other way to the Father, no marvel that a concern rests with me, earnestly to recommend it to all my fellow-creatures, especially such as are setting out on their heavenly journey. Hold fast then without wavering, what thou hast of this faith, I entreat thee; and in simplicity of heart yield thyself up to its workings—turn a deaf ear to the common-place arguments in favour of the current systems and outward modes, and rather avoid much discussion about them. By a calm and constant introversion of thy heart unto God, thou wilt find a renewal and increase of that strength which will enable thee so to let thy light shine before men, as to give indubitable evidence of its origin, and thereby convince, more powerfully than by argument all gainsayers. By thus accustoming thyself to seek access to thy heavenly Father, thou wilt become more and more convinced of the *emptiness* of worldly pursuits and creature

enjoyments, and by a true relish for spiritual things, rise superior to all "lying vanities." Here also thou wilt find thy mind enlarged, and the mysteries of the kingdom opened, by him who keeps the "key of David" in his own possession. Labour then, my dear friend, in retirement and abstraction from sublunary objects (as much as the duties of thy outward calling will admit) for that bread which cometh down from God out of heaven; let not thy allowed recreations be such as have any tendency to deaden thy aspirations to God; keeping in mind the declaration of the Apostle, "He that said he abideth in him, ought himself also to walk even as he walked." With respect to all matters of lesser moment, which distinguish our society from other professors of christianity, I would refer thee to Barclay for our ground respecting them; at the same time reminding thee of our Lord's injunction to call no man Master, in what pertains to the conscience; but whilst the language of the true teacher is, "I will lay no other burden;" whilst thy own heart condemns thee not, in patience possess thy soul, and let the language of thy spirit be, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Oh teach me thy ways and make me a plain path! Hitherto, I trust, conviction, not theory, has been attended to—may all thy steps be the result thereof! no ground

but this, will bear up in the day of trial; many, I fear, have yielded their judgment in religious matters, and moved forwards before their minds were sufficiently impressed with divine truths, to have a sense of the Lord's requirings—and these not feeling accepted in the way they went, when persecution has arisen on account of their testimony, have let it drop, and given occasion to those who seek it, to speak evil of the truth. Ponder then thy path, that all thy ways may be established, wait patiently upon him who not only brings up out of the horrible pit and miry clay, but also puts a new song in the mouth, sets the feet upon a rock, and establishes the goings of those whom he puts forth.

In taking up a resolution to appear in sober attire and to adopt simplicity of manners, I trust thou hast followed, and not run before thy spiritual guide; and it is matter of surprise, that awakened persons of all denominations do not see the necessity of bearing a faithful testimony against the great corruption in the former. If any then think it strange that thou shouldst step out of the common track in this respect, they may be addressed in David's language to one who rebuked him in his zeal for Israel's welfare, "Is there not a cause?" whilst any alteration in thy appearance and manners is recent, particularly such

as indicates a leaning to the Society of Friends, thou wilt probably be much questioned with, and opposed respecting points on which they differ from others, and this not from the gay and giddy only, but from high professors also. Thou mayst also be surrounded by those who may probably watch over thee only for evil; these circumstances will require great circumspection, but I trust the desire of thy heart to adorn the doctrine of God thy Saviour, will be owned by him with that loving favour in which strength is found sufficient to our day, and that he, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession, will enable thee so to confess him before men, that they may be constrained to bear this ancient, though reluctant testimony, "We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except concerning the law of his God."

Much as I have already said, there is yet one matter respecting which I do not feel quite easy to be silent; and that is, the necessity of "counting the cost" that all true disciples of a crucified Lord submit to, in order to the attainment of "the pearl of great price," and fully opening thy mind to the reception of the Apostle's declaration, "that we must, through much tribulation, enter into the kingdom of God." Setting out with this in view, thou wilt be in some degree armed against the assaults

and temptations of the cruel foe, who (when the sensibility of divine favour is in wisdom withdrawn from those who commence their journey in the light thereof, and that darkness in which it shined becomes manifest) tempts the soul with the suggestion that all which it formerly enjoyed and believed in, was delusive imagination—here, the strength of evil being really felt, there is a disposition in the humble to listen too much to this voice of the enemy, and to allow the taunting query "where is now thy God?" rather than, in naked faith, to embrace the gracious encouraging language to those who walk in darkness and have no light, who are commanded in this state, to trust in the name of the Lord and to stay upon their God. Nevertheless I firmly believe, the truly devoted soul, who hath in sincerity purposed to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, will be enabled to abide this hour and power of darkness, and that love to a dying Saviour will produce a willingness to go with him over Cedron's brook and take the allotted portion of that cup which, in drinking, cost him the agonizing sweat of blood; and strengthened by this almighty Redeemer and Preserver of men, the language will be uttered in humble resignation, "Not my will, but thine be done!" May this ever be the case with us, whatever *inscrutable* wisdom may see meet to dispense,

and may the Lord hear in the day of trouble all who have stedfastly purposed to take him for their portion, and give them refuge in the shadow of his wings, until their calamity be overpast. Amen! saith my soul.

This latter communication might appear to some, ill-timed and discouraging: to me, however, it seems safe—we must not think ourselves more wise than the great and compassionate Teacher who was well acquainted with the timidity of his little ones, yet in their state of infancy told them plainly, that all pretensions to discipleship were vain, unless a willingness to deny self, and daily to bear the cross, was previously cherished; and I have never had unity with a certain species of fleshly wisdom, which in endeavouring to enlist soldiers under Christ's banner, adopts a mode very similar to those who keep out of view the hardness which must be endured, and endeavour to allure by temporary gratification. And now, my dear friend! I conclude, desiring to commend thee to God and the word of his grace, as being that which is able to build thee up; and in the pleasing hope that thou wilt be favoured so to increase in the strength of the Lord and in the power of his might, as to stand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand, I affectionately bid thee

FAREWELL!

To a young woman who, under serious impressions, had too hastily formed a resolution to join the Society of Friends.

Dear Friend,

SOME interesting intelligence recently received concerning thee, has so impressed my mind as to induce the present engagement, in which I desire to discharge the duty of an impartial christian counsellor, according to present ability for so important an undertaking. I call it important, because what I am about to treat upon, may affect the peace of a family, the cause of religion, and thy present and everlasting happiness. Oh! may sound wisdom influence my heart, that I may not err with my pen!

The information alluded to, is this: that thou hast so fully embraced the principles of the society of which I am a member, as to think o an open, decided, and prompt avowal of th sentiments, and of acting upon thy prese judgment and bias, by stepping forwards full unity with us as a distinct religious comm nity; and further, that under an apprehensi of danger to thy religious principles and p gress in the spiritual life, thou hast entert ed thoughts of leaving thy nearest relati and even the city in which they reside, w *out any* digested plan for the future.

That the Israel of God must be in very deed "a peculiar people;" and that it is essential to their advancement in true spirituality to be able to say, "I have not sat with vain persons," and for the sake of this holy abstractedness of heart and conduct, to forsake, *if necessary*, even father, mother, or any other natural connection, according to the spiritual import of the injunction, I fully believe: also, that if on account of their confession of their holy Lord and Master before men, they are persecuted in one city where they have dwelt, it *may be lawful* to flee unto another; but as all things which are *lawful* are not always *expedient*, I apprehend a greater nearness to, and union with him, who when oppressed and afflicted, despised and rejected, opened not his mouth, but was content in obedience to his Father's will, to be led as a lamb to the slaughter; to him, I apprehend, a greater nearness would be witnessed, by patiently enduring our fiery trials, than in any refuge we might find by flight. Under the influence of these sentiments thou wilt naturally conclude that I could not hear of thy intentions without concern, especially as I did not find there was just ground for expecting any uncommon opposition to thy prosecuting the religious plan thou mayst have formed. In the love of a christian brother, therefore, I earnestly in-

treat thee to re-consider the matter, and let the duty thy parent hath a claim to—the glorious cause of truth also, which demands our avoiding every appearance of evil; as well as the hazard to thy welfare every way, which a precipitate step in thy present state may involve thee in; let all these be thrown into the scale, and try if they do not, in cool moments, outweigh the inducements to the movement thou hast in view; and above all this, dear friend! in integrity of heart, denying every bias of thy own will, seek earnestly to thy gracious God by prayer, and supplicate for wisdom to *know*, and strength to *perform*, his perfect will concerning thee; and doubtless, he who giveth to all liberally, will not fail thee in this thy time of need.

With respect to the other highly important point, namely, the abandoning the principles in which thou hast been educated, and embracing those of another society; that society too, which is so very peculiar in their religious sentiments, as well as in what outwardly attaches to a stedfast support of their testimonies; a change of this nature appears to involve so much, that I almost shrink from giving counsel thereon: yet this I think may be safely recommended, viz. a close, deep, and serious examination of the ground on which thou *standest*, in contemplating and concluding on

uch a step; whether it be indeed such as is enable; add to this, a deep conviction of our principles, mode of worship, &c. being more accordant with the spirituality of the christian dispensation than those of any other community; also a firm persuasion, or at least, a strong apprehension, that thou art called to confess thy Redeemer in the way we do; and what is still more necessary in order to standing thy ground, whether in very deed, thy heart is so fixed upon God, thy covenant so sincerely entered into with him, thy vows so solemnly made, that if he will be with thee in the way thou now thinkest of stepping into, "he shall be thy God;" and that for the hope of a part and lot in the inheritance of his saints, thou art willing to forsake all that is in the world; to become as a reproach among the enemies of a world renouncing Redeemer, and a fear to thine acquaintance; all which may be consequent upon thy paying *such* vows in the presence of all his people, after the manner of the society towards which thou art looking. This deep examination of thy own heart, and counting the cost to thy creaturely will, of becoming a devoted disciple of a crucified Lord, may not only be safely *recommended*, but (under existing circumstances) I apprehend it to be the duty of a true Friend to press the *necessity* of, and therefore I thu

closely bring them into view. And if, after communing with thy own heart in the stillness of the flesh, thou findest the Spirit of Truth bearing witness with thy own spirit, to the integrity of thy motives and stedfastness of thy purposes to choose henceforth a hope in God for thy portion both in time and eternity, so that thou canst appeal to his omniscience and in the secret of thy soul, truly say, "Thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." Lord! what wilt thou have me to do? Oh send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me! make me a plain path, because of my inward enemies! if after such deep reverent exercise patiently abode in, thou findest thy peace concerned in prosecuting thy purpose of seeking union with the society, in such case I would recommend silent waiting upon and before the Lord in private for a time, and no outward immediate alteration, excepting in one particular, which I apprehend not only christian simplicity, but the depraved and prevalent taste of the times loudly calls for, from every individual of the female sex, who feels any real concern that her country-women should support their claim to true modesty—I mean such a change of apparel as shall evince a strong decided testimony, not only against that vain desire of the fallen natural heart, *which* seeks respectability and admiration

from dress, but also against that disregard even of decency, which too many are reconciled to and appear easy under, to the offence of sober men; many of whom, though unhappily laying but little claim to christian purity of heart, yet value true delicacy, and are capable of duly appreciating it.

I begin to think thou wilt consider me as disposed rather to scrutinize severely than tenderly to sympathize with thee under thy present religious concern; and mayst consider the close and solemn way in which I have treated the subject, as the result of a fixed design to discourage thee altogether from advancing towards Friends—it is not so: I desire, yea at times *long*, to cherish and strengthen the pure breathings after spiritual good, in every quickened soul I meet with, and to give all due encouragement to those who are *fully* convinced of our principles, to their seeking membership with us—but on hearing of thy present views, I confess a fear took hold of my mind, lest any *premature* movement should mar the good work which I trust is begun in thy soul, and particularly such a step as quitting thy family, which I should be much concerned indeed to hear was actually taken. Under this impression I have thus freely and closely communicated on these important points; retaining sincere and affectionate desires for thy

present and eternal welfare, and a readiness at all times to afford such christian counsel as the measure of the gift mercifully vouchsafed, may enable me to do; and in this disposition view me, accepting the love from which the present communication flows.

To a member of the Church of England, who (he believed) had been divinely visited, when very young.

At an early period of thy life, beloved friend! my pen was used to convey some expression of that love which encircles all God's intelligent creation in its wide embrace, and which (being pure in nature and origin) seeks glory and virtue for all; directing to such holiness of heart and life as capacitates for union and communion with the fountain of all good.

Neither lapse of time, nor privation of personal intercourse, have obliterated my first impressions concerning thee. I still remember the breathings of thy spirit to the God of thy life, when, in considering the shortness and uncertainty of time, and the awful condition of those who, on their death-beds, feel their want of Christ, a lively concern arose to improve thy talent, and to devote thy time to *the blessed* purpose of seeking, by prayer in

thy closet, communion with the Beloved of souls. When looking to Jesus, who left a world of glory for a world of corruption, and suffered so much for us, thou clearly sawest the necessity of more frequent and earnest application to him after this manner, than is generally the case; foregoing those foolish amusements, in which people of rank spend most of their precious hours. Thus yielding to the sweet attraction of "everlasting love," thou wast carried as in the bosom of Israel's tender shepherd; and tasting his kindness thyself, didst manifest to others, that "out of the mouths of babes and sucklings he still ordaineth praise," by sweet and simple declarations of his goodness, for the encouragement of an endeared relative; accompanied also with a testimony, which I wish may sink deeper into my heart than it has yet done. "We must consider this world as given to us merely to prepare for the next." All this, I say, dear friend! is now remembered and fresh in my mind; and that others, seeing thy light so early shine, did bless the giver of all good on thy account, and thou wast indeed "dearly beloved and longed for in the Lord" by those who have no joy beyond what is felt in the prospect of an addition to the "little flock" who follow a crucified Redeemer, and particularly from those among the young,

whose situations expose them to many temptations, and if not wholly to turn from, yet follow so far off from that fellowship with him in the suffering process, as in the hour of trial to deny him, and to draw back into a conformity to this world, and into that union with its spirit, in which "the creature is worshipped and served more than the Creator," who ought to be in every heart "God over all." Bear with me then, if under this impression, I suggest the danger we are all in, of departing from the fervent chaste "love of our espousals," without a most determined purpose of heart, strengthened by daily watching and earnest prayer to him who alone is able to keep from falling. Danger is on every hand, and through the several stages of our christian journey and warfare, from the combined force of this world's allurements, and the desires of our fallen nature. Oh then! if so; if, after steps taken in the "way to Sion," and knowledge attained by living *experience*, both of the Lord's goodness and our own weakness and depravity; if still, through the treachery of our own spirits, we are in continual danger of falling away, how much more may the crafty tempter of souls draw aside the youthful *inexperienced* mind, beset with desires peculiar thereto within, and surrounded by temptations *without; if* there be not constant endeavour to

flee from both, under a fixed persuasion that if yielded to, they will so wage war against the soul, as gradually to bring down all its strength, and rob and spoil it of its peace in God. It is in this stage of thy life, thou art now addressed in the love of my spirit, and with the many dangers, peculiar to thy particular situation, full in view, I cannot but feel a solicitude on thy account; lest the first green buddings of the plant of righteousness in thy soul, should inhale the infectious blast of this world's spirit, and so be nipped and wither even before the blossom fully opens: or (to change the figure) by forsaking the pure light of Christ thy Lord, "thy silver should become dross;" "thy wine mixed with water:" nothing can preserve from this, nothing can keep even "the gold from becoming dim," or the "most fine gold from changing" but a single eye to the glory of God, in our allowed thoughts, desires and purposes, and an entire dependance upon his quickening, cleansing and illuminating grace which is in Christ Jesus: without the latter we can do nothing that can kindle or keep alive one spark of heavenly life, or wash the stain of sin from our immortal souls. In any state but the former, whilst the heart is divided, we shall be unstable in our ways; our goodness as the morning cloud and early dew that goeth away;

and there will be no capacity for the reception of that which makes "the whole body full of light." Oh! this power of God! making Jesus our Lord in us, "Wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." What an error to expect help from any thing short thereof! for seeing the need we have of a Saviour lies in our deep fall from the holy image of God in which he first created man, into an earthly and sensual life; seeing also that nothing can possibly effect a *radical* change in our state, but that power which first gave being to all intelligent spirits, to expect the beginning or the carrying on of the work of redemption from any name (or power) under heaven but that of Christ, as the living word by which all things were at first created, is surely as vain and as ineffectual to the regaining our first state in the divine life, as the ancient idolatrous trust in images made of silver and gold: in all our ways, therefore, of seeking God, let us thus acknowledge him as a quickening Spirit from heaven, to raise our inner man up to a heavenly place or state; and who, having so raised, can keep from falling again: let us seek him as a principle of the divine nature, a kingdom or manifestation of God within us; if haply thus feeling after him, we may, in very deed, find him to be "*Immanuel*, God with us." I trust I am not

speaking to thee altogether in an unknown tongue; but that from an attentive perusal of the sacred records, with an understanding measurably enlightened, and (what is still more precious) a heart opened to receive the truth as it is in Jesus, thou art convinced that what was lost in the first Adam, and that which the Lord from heaven, the quickening Spirit, revives, is *a state of life*, even *a divine life*, after the image of him who at the first created man therein; if this my hope be well grounded, thou wilt perceive on what I rest all I have above declared; and from which I earnestly recommend a looking to him alone for redemption and preservation. Oh! when it is once known and felt, that life, "the life of God," is what we are alienated from and dead unto, how many things dwindle into insignificance! how weak and vain appears the least reliance upon opinions, creeds, modes of worship, and particularly man's creaturely endowments, however highly cultivated! all, under this conviction, is accounted less than nothing and vanity; but in the manifestation of that life which is the light of men, through the operation of that spirit which alone quickeneth it, and then comforts with a sensible evidence of its being indeed in us and we in it, joined to, and one spirit with, our redeeming Lord, our inward existence is, even in this,

"hid with him in God." Now what is it that prepares the heart for the full reception of such doctrine as this? a hunger and thirst after righteousness; a sincere ardent longing after that purity of heart in which we can now enjoy, and ultimately see our God. For in seeking and striving after this state, the soul is soon painfully sensible of the insufficiency, not only of outward observances and the help of man, but also of its own efforts (however sincere and earnest) to effect a radical change, or to lay the axe to the deep root of a fallen nature: with this discernment and sensibility the earnest seeker is soon driven from all carnal dependance on this or that—a cry is raised which reaches the ear of Omnipotence, and out of the depths of a contrite spirit, the eye of the soul is directed unto him who dwelleth in the heavens; even to him who abideth the high priest of his church, and who alone communicates the one thing needful; that which can be truly available, even "the power of an endless life." The real and constant longing then, of the soul after heavenly purity, is the capacity for true illumination, and certain way thereto: and when accompanied with true resignation and submission of the creaturely will to that of the Creator, in which both become "one spirit," it hath the promise of true *discernment*, from Christ himself. "My doc-

trine," said he, "is not mine, but his that sent me; if any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, &c. &c." See then, my dear friend! thy school and thy exercise therein, if thou desire to advance in real christian knowledge, both in doctrine and experience. Ponder deeply those words of thy Lord, and yield thy judgment to all the consequences that necessarily flow from them. Oh that there were more students in this true christian academy! then would there be a prospect of real benefit to the Lord's heritage, from the labours of workmen taught of God themselves, and who, being thus furnished, and by him commissioned, would be able rightly to divide the word of truth; preachers like him whose care it was to divest his communications on spiritual subjects of that which in this day is admired, as constituting much of excellence in such engagements, and without which, the necessary requisite for ministry is supposed wanting; namely, "wisdom of words and excellency of speech." Ministers who first knowing in their own experience that his kingdom (divine life restored to the soul) is not in word but in power, would evince a uniform concern that the faith of their hearers should stand solely therein; and a laborious, studied and scholastic knowledge, clothed with the most luminous display of rhetoric and oratory, being clearly

seen to go no further than a ministration of the letter, they would willingly and naturally leave to the scribe and the wise of this world, to adorn themselves with, and to shine forth in all the lustre and purity of classical diction, without envying the admiration excited from supposed taste and critical judgment in divinity knowledge; although beautiful! beautiful! resound from every quarter. But where, or in what church shall we find such pastors? men willing to forego all the honour that is lavished on the capability of opening veins of rich and happy eloquence in illustration of such doctrinal points as they and their hearers happen to have made their foundation-stone? were such simple ones again to arise, resting all hope of helping their hearers, upon the power of Christ in their own hearts enabling them out of the abundance thereof, so to minister, even of the ability which God giveth; whilst itching ears, instead of contrite spirits, continue so notoriously to characterize the churches, it is to be feared such preachers would not have many hearers. I conclude thou art a little surprised at my thus speaking of the present day, and state of the church—a different view of things I am aware is very general, but this shakes not my judgment in the least. I might exceed reasonable limits *on this subject,* but one or two other marks of

degeneracy, too obvious to be over-looked, I will just touch upon. Can there be stronger delusion in judgment than to suppose the seeking riches and honour and the enjoyment of pleasure in this present world, compatible with the example of our holy Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? Does it not seem as if the first great deceiver and foe of man had so spread his delusive influence in the human mind as to pervade all its powers? seeing the bulk of professors conclude they have taken him for their Lawgiver and pattern, whilst they are not only *allowing* but *seeking* softness and elegance in their dwellings; fulness of bread, and in some instances "abundance of idleness" in their daily course; and in most, such attentions and solicitudes as turn to no more account God-ward, than contrivances and expence to have the fruits of the earth before the sun can put them forth! in nearly all, (not restricted by slender means) there is a stateliness in manner and deportment, with such tenacity respecting worldly distinctions, as renders to the view of infidels any real difference betwixt man and man very questionable. We may, though having eyes, be yet so blind as not to see the open glaring contrariety exhibited in the allowed practice of the day, to the plain doctrines and uniform example of a world-renouncing Lord; such blindness may

(through our conformity to its manners) come upon us that are professors; but this, I think, we may be assured of, that the enemies of the Lord Jesus, Deists and Infidels of every class, are, and will continue to be more quick-sighted; the broad sneer of derision will be on their countenances; sarcastic strictures will be freely allowed and remain unrepelled. "These pilgrims and strangers, say they, seem to get a little reconciled to this foreign clime, though so far from their native country and their father's house; this howling wilderness, as they call it, appears, some how or other, to have received a manure that hath so enriched the soil as to render it capable of producing very pleasant fruits, even to their refined taste; and like us who know of no better portion than our good things in this life, they seem to sit down, each under his own vine and under his own fig-tree; to that, though it seems we are to be forever separated at the end of the journey—*they* raised up to everlasting glory for having followed, as they phrase it, a crucified Lord, and *we* consigned to shame and everlasting contempt for having denied him, yet we really appear to be travelling in the same direction; at least we go in great harmony together, and walk through this vale of tears as friends."

—Oh how long! how long! shall the enemies of *the cross of Christ* have cause thus to triumph?

long shall such speak grievous things,
ıdly and contemptuously against the Lord
his anointed, through the occasion given by
e who profess adherence to doctrines which
ın and demand the crucifixion of the flesh,
are at the same time seen to be making full
ision for the gratification of its desires!
e eye, when fixed on these things, affect-
my heart, and as I watch, sitting alone and
ı sparrow on the house-top, my inward
guage often accords with that of the Pro-
, "woe is me, for I am as when they have
ered the summer fruits; "the good man
rished out of the earth, &c. &c." Thus
ng and feeling, I have long been convinced
he necessity of taking the counsel he sub-
, and of imitating the conduct he adopted,
rust ye not in a friend; put ye not confi-
e in a guide; I will look unto the Lord;
ll wait for the God of my salvation, until he
d my cause, and execute judgment for me."
at has been already mentioned relates to
tice; but Oh! what shall be said with re-
t to *doctrine:* even that preached and enfor-
by those who assume the appellation of evan-
al teachers; of gospel ministers? doctrine
h inculcates the compatibility of drawing
using the devouring sword; of spreading
lation, destruction, and every species of
or amongst the Lord's intelligent crea-

tures, with a participation of the spirit of the meek, passive, loving, suffering spirit of the Lamb of God, and also with obedience to the precepts and commands he hath given to his followers. When, likewise, many of these teachers can dare to charge the God of love foolishly, by declaring his covenant of redemption in Christ Jesus, to be limited, reaching in its effectual operation, to a *chosen few* only; whilst the rest, myriads and myriads, in every generation, born heirs of Adam's pollution and misery, were never meant, in the secret counsel and will of God, to be included in this covenant, but are left to perish eternally; having only such calls from him to turn from their iniquity, as aggravate their continuance therein, but which communicate nothing of that redeeming power which alone could possibly deliver therefrom; *that* being confined to the elect. These are some of the marks that the present is, as I conceive, a dark day—a day in which the children of the light should indeed hold fast the faithful word of truth; having no fellowship with such shockingly gross errors. It seems to me very desirable, that even beginners in religion, should have enlightened views of the signs of the times their lot is cast in: blindness in this respect so hardened the hearts of the teachers, rulers, *and high professors* of the fallen Jewish church,

as to render them inaccessible to the combined force of miraculous power, heavenly wisdom, and much love, united and continually manifested in Christ Jesus their long promised Messiah; apprehending their reigning orthodoxy illumined, and (because they conformed to the tradition of their elders) their practice pure; to this their strong hold, they fled from his convicting light in their own conscience; and though at times sensible that man had never before so spoke as he had done, all was rejected, and their Redeemer's doctrines and miracles despised because the chief pharisees and rulers believed not on him, and none but those who were the unlearned in their law, appeared to be impressed therewith; the judgment of whom they treated with the utmost contempt: "this people," said they, "who knoweth not the law, are cursed." That this old leaven of the leading letter-learning men of that dark church is too prevalent in the present day, must, I think, be obvious to seeing eyes. The received orthodoxy, that only which hath the stamp of *sound* from the signet of the classically illuminated, mostly fixing the judgment, and influencing the practice: and apprehending that the consequences of *resting* upon the current orthodoxy, of whatsoever community we may be members, must be as dangerous now, as formerly, I cannot but

think a clear view of the "signs of the times" needful for all who are truly desirous to come out of spiritual Babylon and make straight steps towards mount Zion, "the city of the living God; the heavenly Jerusulem;" so as at last to join the spirits of the just already made perfect, and in their blessed mansions there.

The latter part of this communication was not in my view when I first sat down; were I to reason upon it, my faith might possibly waver a little as to its being the food convenient for thy present state and growth—but a hope remains, that it may, at least, prove as "bread cast upon the waters," though aliment be not derived until "after many days," and in that hope I leave it all to thy serious consideration. A weakened and still weakening frame, makes the injunction "what thou doest, do quickly," appear quite proper for my guidance; and acting upon this assumption, admitting the possibility of this being the last token of my christian love to thee, my dear friend! I have given scope to my thought and pen, and kept back nothing that I believed might now or hereafter prove profitable. Suffer then, the word of exhortation thus lengthened out; may the Father of lights bless it to thy understanding, and heart also! May he fit and prepare thee for the reception of

instruments needless, even the truth itself, unmixed, infallible! To him then, and the word of his grace, as that alone which can "build thee up," I must now commend thee. Be faithful, I entreat thee, to thy God! his call to holiness thou hast heard; his drawings of tender love thou hast felt and rejoiced in; he "remembers the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals," and he "hates putting away." Take heed then to thine own spirit, and deal not treacherously with the Beloved of souls, lest the sorrows of spiritual widowhood should be thy bitter portion; but rather, boldly and stedfastly acknowledge him before men, in all thy ways, and under all circumstances which he may allot or permit—laying aside every weight, look to thy dear Redeemer or thy only pattern and teacher; follow him closely and not afar off, and thou wilt find that faithful is he that calleth, and that loving, he loveth to the end—his everlasting arm of power will be thy support, and the consolations of his holy spirit thy comfort, under all the trials and vicissitudes of this life, as well as in every depth of spiritual exercise needful to thy passing from death unto life—the clothing of his armour of light will strengthen thee to repel the fiery darts levelled by the prince of darkness, with whom thou must contend in so fighting the good fight of

faith as finally to "lay hold of eternal life;" and thus enabling thee to overcome the combined force of all thy soul's enemies, making thee more than conqueror through his redeeming love, thy course will end with joy and triumph, and this song to his praise and the encouragement of others, will be heard within thy borders, "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?"

Beloved friend, farewell! May the God of Jacob be thy portion! May he never leave thee nor forsake thee! until he hath done all that to thee and for thee, which the first gentle whispers of his Spirit spake to thee of, and thou didst then so earnestly desire.

To a Friend.

THY kind favour came duly to hand. Considerable aridity as respects others, seems interwoven in my mental texture, yet at times something of another sort is elicited towards individuals—I think this was the case during my intercourse with thee and some others at ******, and I trust not *altogether* from the great kindness and attention *dear self* was shewn. The capability of taking real and lively interest in the spiritual concerns of *others*, I consider an attainment; a genuine

result of deep exercise on our own account; which, bringing into some experimental knowledge of what opposes, assails and discourages the soul that in good earnest is striving to make straight steps Zion-ward, qualifies (according to the measure of faith received) to speak a word of encouragement to *such*, when weary through unavoidable weakness; as also a word of instruction and reproof, when through lukewarmness, the cares of, or conformity to, this present world, there is a compassing that mount in the wilderness, whence come blackness and darkness—whence issues that which brings terror and fear, instead of advancing forward to the city of the living God, to that state wherein the heavenly gift and powers of the world to come are tasted. Now I do not assume that I have the discernment which would clearly shew the morsel I should divide with thee just now, but am quite disposed if I knew how, to stir thee up to diligence and watchfulness; yea, to give *all diligence* to make thy calling and election sure—even to find thy precious soul's true rest in the bosom of that love which created thee and gave the dear Lord Jesus to redeem thee. I believe thine eye has been touched with that light in which all mundane possessions and enjoyments appear as dross, compared with what our God hath prepared for them that love

him; and that looking at the beauties of holiness thou hast even longed for that purity of heart in which the righteous see their God—yet I am led to apprehend the eye has not been kept steadfastly fixed on the mark, nor the power, which draws the affections of the soul, so deeply abode with as to effect an entire union with the Beloved of stedfast spirits; so that the language still is, "Oh that I knew where I might find him?" "tell me where thou feedest!" "why should I be as one that turneth aside, &c." yet I trust he is, in some degree, him whom thy soul loveth, and although too often denied in the hour of temptation, has never been sold, nor (I hope) ever will be.

Let us humble ourselves under a sense of the treachery of our spirits, which causes leanness and internal dreariness: in the very nature of things this will be felt for a time, even by the steady traveller whilst passing through the wilderness; but our instability, the fear of man, and too much looking at others—our earthly solicitudes and selfish interest and views, are too commonly, wilfully added to the unavoidable pressure of infirmity, so that in our *occasional* endeavours to wait on our Lord, we are not sensible of mounting upward *in* lively breathings to him: but be this it may, we must feel after him with the desire that re-

mains, although it may seem as "ready to die;" we must hope and quietly wait, for unto whom can we go? If we cast away our confidence, the cruel foe (as I have unhappily known) will trample us under foot. Persevere then, dear friend! in humble secret waiting upon thy God, denying self in every thing thou knowest brings dryness over thy spirit and clogs its ascent heaven-ward—if poor and needy, seeking water thou findest none, remember that no new thing has happened to thee—ancient saints have mourned like doves, refused to be comforted, whilst their God seemed to stand afar off; but all the faithful have ultimately found peace and rest in him—let even the *lawful* concerns of this life be watched, kept subordinate to the great business—redeem time, and allow none to unmeaning intercourse either with the living or the dead—in the discharge of relative duties we may hope for preservation, but let us not dry up the moisture we have, with idlers and triflers.

Thus much in the freedom of christian love—write whenever thou art so disposed, but do not reckon upon a reply—I have never yet submitted to the shackles of a regular correspondence, nor do I mean to do it; yet I should rejoice to be helpful to thee, as a sincere and

affectionate friend, which I trust thou mayst believe me to be. W. L.

To a young person, for whose welfare he had felt particularly interested.

To some, in primitive times, whom the holy Apostles could address as "dearly beloved and longed for in the Lord," he observed, that to write the "same things" unto them as had perhaps been frequently enforced, whilst not grievous to him, was safe for such objects of his tender solicitude. It will not then appear strange or superfluous to thee, I apprehend, my beloved friend! if the interest I take in thy advancement in the way of holiness should lead me to repeat some matters relative thereto, which have heretofore been enlarged upon, and once more to beseech thee by the mercies of that God whose wisdom, love and power thou hast witnessed, that thou present thyself a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable in his sight; that so being renewed in the spirit of thy mind, and thy will being fully subjected to him, thou mayst be favoured to know, and strengthened to perform what is good and acceptable in his sight; for here it is in the full submission of the creaturely will, that divine counsel is clearly known. "As I hear, I *judge,*" said our blessed Lord; and he added,

"my judgment is just, because I seek not mine own will, but the will of him that sent me;" and when we are enabled, through the power of his love in our hearts, to know it to be as meat and drink to us, to serve our heavenly Father, and to desire only in our passage through time, that we may finish the work he hath appointed for us to do, by glorifying him on the earth, and openly acknowledging his dear Son, our holy Redeemer, before men; when thus, in *the strength of the Lord*, we set our faces against the enemies of our own houses, we shall come to know that he whose name "is wonderful," is also a "counsellor" to his dedicated followers; and that although for the trial of their faith and love, he may suffer them for a time to "wander in the wilderness, in a solitary way, finding no city to dwell in," yet in his own time will he lead them by a right way, and they at length will find a quiet habitation.

Well, dear friend! I once more salute thee in that love which sincerely, and perhaps I may say anxiously, desires thy growth in that which hath drawn thy mind from the vanities of a perishing world, into a longing desire after an intercourse with the fountain of good, and a participation of that river, the streams of which make glad the heritage of God. May it please the giver of every good and perfect

gift, to look down in mercy upon thy state, and replenish thy soul with the dew of heaven! May he (in his own time) arise unto thee as a morning without clouds, and cheer thy soul with the bright beams of his love! May he teach "thy hands to war and thy fingers to fight," and preserve thee in thy comings in and goings out, from this time forth and for evermore! Amen!

And Oh! dear friend! labour after willingness to *suffer* with thy Lord; remembering, that those who finally stand on mount Sion, with crowns on their heads and palms in their hands, first ascend Calvary's top, and for Jesus's sake take their allotted portion of the vinegar mingled with gall: drink then of thy Redeemer's cup; be faithful unto death; and he who cannot lie, hath said, "I will give thee a crown of life."

FAREWELL!

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